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The Week

FOR a reason different from those commonly asserted, the Democratic landslide is a rebuke to President Hoover. Administration circles will say that it was due to hard times, for which the President is not responsible. They will say that it was largely influenced by the prohibition issue, on which both parties are split. They will say that it was in part a normal reaction which always occurs, at least to some extent, two years after the presidential election. All these assertions are true, and, so far as they go, are valid replies to the argument that the President is at fault. But the real failure of Mr. Hoover is that, though he appeared to be capable of better things, he attempted to ride to political success by giving rein to his party machine on just such issues. The Republican party had claimed the credit for prosperity; Mr. Hoover backed the claim. When depression arrived, he failed to acknowledge it frankly or to be prepared for it. The Republicans prescribed once more their traditional patent medicine for business —the protective tariff; Hoover surrendered to them, and the dose did not work. Mr. Hoover equivocated on prohibition, leaning to the Dry side because it seemed the more popular; he is suffering for it. Meanwhile he has failed to develop aggressive personal leadership toward those non-political goals which he was supposed to have in mind. The truth is that public confidence in the President has sunk so low that he was unable to stem the tide which fate set against him.

IT IS becoming almost a habit of the American electorate to take away control of Congress from the party in power at the mid-term election. Although as we write the exact outcome is still in doubt, it is certain that both House and Senate will be closely divided, with the balance of power in the hands of a small group of progressives, nominally representing both parties but actually voting as a unit more often than they do on orthodox party lines. The progressives are the only group in Congress who have any definite constructive policy on the vital issues with which the country is faced; if they cannot have complete control, it is an excellent thing that they should exercise a veto power. The one regret in this situation is that after the new Congress meets, in 1931, his lack of a majority will give President Hoover a convenient alibi in regard to his own failures. As a rule, we should prefer to see the President supported by a majority in both Houses in order to avoid clouding the issue; but Mr. Hoover's attitude on public utilities, the tariff, conservation and other questions strongly suggests the urgent need of such sabotage as the progressives can now accomplish.

NOT in many years has there been an election where the results in individual cases were so satisfactory to progressives. Norris in Nebraska, Walsh in Montana, Pinchot in Pennsylvania, La Follette in Wisconsin, Costigan in Colorado, Borah in Idaho, Couzens in Michigan all appear, on the basis of incomplete returns, to have been elected by substantial majorities. The result cannot be attributed to either prohibition or the anti-Republican drift: the progressives are divided on prohibition and five of those mentioned are Republicans. The results justify the belief that in hard times people will think a little more realistically on fundamental issues than when skies are sunny.

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EVEN the Wets must be surprised at the extent of their victory in the election. In state after state where prohibition was an issue, the Drys were defeated, and in three states where advisory referenda were held, the vote went Wet by heavy majorities. In the congressional elections, the Wets won about thirty seats, and lost few or none. There can no longer be any doubt that the tide of public impatience with existing conditions is steadily rising. Neither party can hope to win in 1932 if it takes a definite Dry stand; either they will dodge the issue or they will go Wet, and to straddle is likely to prove almost as dangerous as to remain Dry. How the prohibition muddle is to be ended we do not know; but we do know the country will no longer tolerate a refusal to make the attempt.

GOVERNOR Roosevelt's tremendous victory in New York is due to a complex of forces. It is due to general influences like the reaction against "Republican prosperity" and the flood of Wet sentiment. It is due to Mr. Roosevelt's personal strength with the voters, to his espousal of progressive measures and his campaign against extortionate public utilities. But these public issues rest on a very solid base of practical politics. Up-state New York, which for the first time in years returned a Democratic majority, would scarcely have done so had not Mr. Roosevelt taken such pains to strengthen the local Democratic organizations. And New York City, which piled up such a mountainous vote for him, was stimulated by a Herculean effort of the local Democratic machine thus to bury the charge of corruption. Good organization could do this, because the citizens did not care deeply about the charge. They had been educated not to care by respectable Republicans like Hoover, Hughes, Root, et al., who loyally supported their party during and after the Harding scandals, which were infinitely worse than anything alleged against Tammany. The New York voters believed that the present charges were trumped up for political purposes. They believed that some corruption is inevitable in local politics, and that one party is no more to be trusted than the other. It remains to be seen whether a similar sentiment throughout the nation will be strong enough to permit Mr. Roosevelt to achieve the success now predicted for him as a candidate for presidential nomination and election. The big vote which Tammany helped Mr. Roosevelt get in New York may yet turn out to be an obstacle to his further progress.

OUTSIDE of Governor Roosevelt's victory, perhaps the most striking state contest was that in which Connecticut elected its first Democratic Governor since the Progressive-Republican split in 1912, and its first in a straight two-party fight since the days of Cleveland. Former Dean Wilbur L. Cross of the Yale Graduate School defeated the Roraback candidate, E. E. Rogers, partly on the Wet issue—though Rogers straddled enough so that the Drys would have had little consolation if he had won. Another powerful influence, however, was the growing disgust with a Republican machine which is frankly linked with the utilities and unashamedly serves their interest. Indeed, the discomfiture of the power trust is one of the outstanding features of the election everywhere. It lost not only in Connecticut and New York, but in Pennsylvania, where its influence probably had more to do with the defection of the Vare machine from Pinchot than did the prohibition issue. Pinchot, it was true, profited from the desire of the Mellon political interests, which control Pittsburgh, to squelch Vare in Philadelphia, but his progressive policy on power was one of his strongest appeals to those voters not controlled by local bosses. The utilities failed to defeat Norris in Nebraska or Walsh in Montana. The election of Democratic Governors in Ohio and Massachusetts was probably part of the Wet and anti-Republican tide, as was that of James Hamilton Lewis over Ruth Hanna McCormick as Senator from Illinois.

IT IS easy to understand that President Hoover must be under a serious strain these days and that his temper is likely to be short, especially at the mention of the word oil in connection with his Department of the Interior. But his irate vindication of the Attorney General's report upon the charges brought by Mr. Kelley does nothing to increase confidence in that report. Mr. Kelley had already, in answer to the assertion made in the report that he had himself recommended the patents against which he now protests, pointed out that, once his office had been overruled, he had been forced formally to approve the secretary's ruling; yet Mr. Hoover continues to assert that the patents had been approved by Mr. Kelley. And he proceeds to a glowing encomium of the officials in the present administration for their disinterestedness in "serving the government to the sacrifice of the satisfactions and remunerations he or she could command from private life." But that is not the question: the question is whether the Department of the Interior is still allowing the oil companies to rob the people. Mr. Hoover talks as if no public official had ever been known to abandon private employments and then abuse or neglect public office. Furthermore, what about Mr. Kelley, who has been holding public office for a quarter of a century? If public officials deserve credit for preferring the public service to the remunerations of private life, has not Mr. Kelley earned respect?

THE Immigration Bureau has finally decided against Guido Serio, an Italian Communist under sentence of deportation from the United States for making a Communist speech in Erie, Pennsylvania, last spring. In a long list of similar cases, the Immigration Bureau has in the past permitted an individual sentenced to deportation to leave voluntarily for some other country of his own choice, pay-

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ing his transportation. Soviet Russia has indicated its willingness to receive Serio, and funds for his transportation are available, but for some curious reason the Immigration Bureau insists that he must be sent back to Italy and nowhere else. In his case, this is equivalent to a sentence of death; Serio is a well known enemy of Mussolini, and the chances are about fifty to one that he will be executed on a charge of treason as soon as the Italian government gets its hands on him. It is impossible to understand why the Immigration Bureau should have altered its policy in this one case, unless it is acting in concert with Mussolini to deliver into his hands a man who is guilty of little or nothing, as far as American law is concerned. The case has been brought, on a technicality, before Federal Judge William Bondy, of New York, who has already indicated his belief that the Immigration Bureau is not using common sense in its treatment of Serio. We earnestly hope that Judge Bondy will be able to see his way clear to save Serio's life.

SEVERAL times in recent years, charges have been made that slavery continues to be practised in Liberia, the little Negro republic established under American auspices on the west coast of Africa, north of the Equator. Some time ago the League of Nations, with the coöperation of the United States, appointed a committee to investigate this question. It has now made its report to the League, but the document has not yet been published. What seems to be an accurate summary of its contents, however, has leaked out and has been published in the United States by The Afro-American. According to this summary, the commission finds that forced labor, indistinguishable from slavery, is widespread in Liberia both for private and public purposes. It is practised by a government representing some 15,000 "civilized" Liberians of American origin, living along the coast, upon the aboriginal population of about 2,000,000. The Liberians hold natives as "pawns" for debt and treat them virtually as slaves. In some cases, women are made pawns in this way, and used "to attract male laborers to plantations"—which is presumably a polite way of describing forced prostitution. Compulsory labor is employed in road construction and porterage; and such labor is recruited and worked "under conditions involving systematic intimidation and ill treatment" on the part of officials. A racket, on the good American order, has been developed: natives are threatened with conscription and are forced to pay for exemption.

SUCH a report might cause some hasty readers to conclude that Negro government in Liberia is a failure; but this would be unfair. The American member of the commission making this report was a Negro, Professor Charles S. Johnson, of Fisk University; and the demand for an investigation came from Negroes in Liberia led by Mr. T. J. Faulkner. Hitherto, Mr. Faulkner and the many other Liberians who agree with him have been powerless because of the dictatorship of President King and the Whig clique surrounding him. If the report of the League of Nations commission is as drastic as the forecast indicates, it may force a change in administration, and an improvement of conditions. It is highly desirable that the United States, and in particular the American Negroes, should assist Liberia economically and socially, but it would be a tragedy if the independence of the country were destroyed. Bad as are conditions there, they are just as bad or worse in other parts of Africa, under the control of supposedly enlightened European states. As Dr. R. L. Buell observes in "The Native Problem in Africa," "the Liberian government has not been strong enough to impose upon the natives of the hinterland the grinding exactions which an industrialized administration has imposed upon the natives in many other parts of Africa." The most useful thing the United States can do is not to interfere with Liberia specifically, but to cöoperate with the League of Nations and the International Labor Office in their efforts to stamp out forced labor and slavery in every part of the world.

Buy Now—If You Can!

DURING industrial depression economic nostrums flourish; none flourishes more widely at present than the "buy now" campaign. It was first hinted at, as far as our observation goes, in one of Mr. Coolidge's matchless daily paragraphs some weeks ago. Labor, he said in substance, is responsible for the depression. This quaint thesis he maintained by the assertion that trade is slack because labor is not buying enough; if the workers would buy more and save less, we should be prosperous.

How much good can the "buy now" campaign do? That depends largely on what the cause of the depression really is. The campaign seems to rest on the assumption that our trouble was brought about by a great many ultimate consumers who, though they suffered no diminution of income and could buy as much as ever if they wanted to, suddenly curtailed their expenditures. It is akin to the popular doctrine that a "buyers' strike" against high prices caused the depression of 1920-21. Exhaustive research has failed to establish that doctrine, and it is dubious whether the current version will turn out to be any more soundly based.

If it were true, we should expect to discover that the first evidence of depression was a falling off of retail trade, that this reduction continued back through wholesalers and manufacturers until it eventually hit basic industries and raw materials, and that it was of sufficient magnitude to have occasioned what followed. One would also have to demonstrate that this falling off of buying was not due to any reduction of consumers' purchasing power, and that they could voluntarily resume their former spending at any time. Studies of previous

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cycles indicate, however, that as a rule the first evidences of depression appear, not in a slackening of retail trade but in some productive industry, and that retail trade shrinks far less during a depression than does primary production. It is obvious, too, that the eventual slackening of retail purchase is largely due to other factors of the depression such as unemployment, part-time work, reduced salaries and profits.

All this is far from asserting that the amount of purchasing power in the hands of consumers can have nothing to do with industrial depression. It may be true, for instance, that when production is increasing very rapidly, wage and salary payments fail to increase as much. Then, if prices do not fall, the wage and salary earners may not be able to enlarge their purchases enough to keep the factories busy. Such a course of affairs would not show up as an actual decline in retail trade at the beginning of a depression; the situation would be that retail trade did not grow rapidly enough to prevent the accumulation of unsold goods, or at least of a large surplus of equipment to make the goods. Thus new production would be drastically curtailed, prices would fall, unemployment would increase and the depression would be on.

Another possibility which has been suggested arises from the rapid increase of instalment sales during our recent prosperity. So long as it was possible to keep on expanding this form of credit, orders came in and production boomed. But there may have come a time when it was more difficult to find consumers who were good credit risks and who were not already loaded up with as much instalment debt as they could carry. Such a saturation point may have caused a slump in automobile sales and production, for instance. And the efforts of people to keep up their instalments during depression may have curtailed their purchases at retail shops.

All these possibilities imply that the consumers could not at will enlarge their purchases. At least they could not do so without incurring debts which they might not be able to pay. We doubt if going deeper into debt is a good way to resuscitate good times.

It may be, of course, that there are an appreciable number of consumers who stopped buying simply because they got sick of having so many new things, and wanted to do something else for a while besides go shopping and receive calls from supersalesmen. They may have three cars in their garages, brand-new houses fitted up with all the latest electric, chromium-plated and colored-tile gadgets, closets bursting open with suits, dresses, overcoats and shoes, dozen of pairs of unused blankets and sheets, a radio in every room, and a couple of books. It may be that these rebels can be induced to buy a little now just because prices are low. We are moved to remark, however, that if there really are many persons in this state of mind, the future of capitalist industry as we know it in America is perilous indeed. The reluctance to buy may be chronic and catching. If we should all get it, the simple life would return with a vengeance, while green grass crept over the ruins of countless industrial towns.

Buy now—if you can! The advice is sound when addressed to corporations which can chart their future needs and have large unspent surpluses. It is sound for individuals who have some extra money, know what they need most, can get it cheaply, and can distinguish between a genuine bargain and a "sale." But it is a pretty superficial way of tackling the great problem of industrial depression. It is another distressing indication of the shallowness of the American business mind.

The Melodrama of Communism

IN THE novels and plays of the nineteenth century the wicked nobleman appeared for the first time as a stock comic character and butt. There had been plenty of wicked noblemen in the Renaissance and they had frequently been put on the stage; but the great prince was almost always a hero, though sometimes a tragic hero—on the rare occasions when he was a villain, he was always an heroic villain. There are only two or three bad monarchs in Shakespeare, and they are on an heroic scale—and we feel for Don Juan, from Molina to Molière, as much admiration as horror. Such an outburst as that of Flammineo in "The White Devil" over the thankless lot of the parasites of princes comes as a surprise in Elizabethan drama.

But with the breakdown of the feudal system and the rise of the middle class, the nobleman of literature becomes for the first time contemptible and comic. The English public, which two centuries before had been thrilled by the ambitions of Richard III as much as by the perplexities of Hamlet, who had applauded the magnificence and arrogance of Tamburlaine (a self-made prince, but a prince par excellence), now delighted in the discomfiture by Nicholas Nickelby of Lord Verisopht and Sir Mulberry Hawk and felt a profound gratification when George Rouncewell, the ironmaster, compelled Sir Leicester Dedlock to receive him in his drawing-room. In America, Dickens was particularly popular: we were ourselves Nicholas Nickelby and George Rouncewell. And we not only rejoiced in the sort of melodrama which symbolized our breaking away from the feudal world and setting up a middle-class democratic system of our own, we even created a native melodrama of the type of Mrs. Mowatt's "Fashion," which got its excitement from making the true homespun George Rouncewells score off other effete Rouncewells who were attempting to cultivate in America the pretensions of Sir Leicester Dedlock. Well up through the beginning of this century, we continued to respond with enthusiasm in the theater to the baiting or besting of the British aristocracy by the plain-spoken

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American democrat. This had begun to be thought a little cheap by the time George M. Cohan exploited it; but he was able none the less to build his first great success upon it. And it is not so very long ago since William Hodge was still playing "The Man from Home."

The audiences at "Roar China," the Russian play just presented by the Theater Guild, encountered the Man from Home again, but this time under a very different aspect. In the Russian play, the blunt American trader who deals in coolie labor and falls overboard in a quarrel with a Chinese boatman is represented as a scoundrel and a brute; and even though he is prepared to snap his fingers at the British aristocracy, their solidarity is shown to be with him. He no longer resembles Abraham Lincoln any more than Sir Mulberry Hawk resembles Hamlet. And the new stock character who now plays the role of hero to the American's villain, as the American himself once played it to the wicked foreign nobleman, is the nameless proletarian.

The fact of this new melodrama which is now reaching us—we have had it in films such as "Storm over Asia" as well as on the stage—is calculated to give Americans seriously to think about themselves. That Americans are capable of being deeply stirred by these melodramas from Russia will not be disputed by anyone who has sat in an American audience watching one. And that at the same time they find them disquieting is evident from the peevish and confused reviews which "Roar China" received for the most part from the newspapers. Anyone who has ever gone to "Storm over Asia" with a friend and had him indignantly walk out in the middle must realize that the melodrama of the Russians has the power both to move and to enrage us, and that when it is a question of an oriental people revolting against Anglo-Saxon exploiters, we do not make any difference between the British (the Europeans in "Storm over Asia" are obviously intended to be British) and ourselves—just exactly as the author of "Roar China" represents the British as identifying their interests with those of the obnoxious American as against the Chinese.

And it is extremely doubtful whether American melodrama is capable any longer of arousing us in the way that the Russian ones do. "The Man from Home" has lost most of his savor and William Hodge has gone in for mystery plays. The young country boy who puts to confusion the city slicker who has seduced the country girl and the old skinflint with a mortgage on the farm have become stale now even as a joke. For really effective popular melodrama, melodrama which can move the judicious as well as the simple, you must have some confrontation of good and bad, of justice and injustice, which represents a real contrast and conflict in the society to which the audience belongs. And in the United States today the antagonism between the city man and the countryman is nearly as much out of date as the defiance by the honest American democrat of the aristocratic cad. Such a theme as the revolt of the human prisoner against the unhumanity of capital punishment and imprisonment may produce one first-rate melodrama in "The Last Mile," but the situation is one which does not come within the actual experience of the audience, so that the theme cannot really become a popular one. And as for crook and mystery plays, they may surprise and startle us, they may hold us in suspense, but they do not electrify us with alternate elation and indignation, as the old-fashioned American melodramas did and as the modern Russian ones do.

And where melodrama decays, the theater languishes. If we were capable of really good melodramas, we should probably be capable of more first-rate serious plays—of which, in spite of our overdeveloped theatrical business, the dearth in the United States has been so striking. As a matter of fact, a great deal of first-rate drama *is* melodrama. Dr. Stockmann and Nora Helmer are melodrama—they have grown straight out of the frank and obvious melodrama of "The Pillars of Society."

The melodrama of the U. S. S. R. is then one of the most formidable portents which has yet reached us from Russia—a phenomenon which we must take as seriously as the sales of Russian wheat. What makes Russian wheat and plays both formidable is the social idealism behind them—and what makes American drama, like many other American things, unsatisfactory, in spite of the resources apparently at our command, is the lack of such social idealism. One may even doubt whether the Americans will ever be able to produce really great plays, or indeed great literature of any kind, until they can find the elements of melodrama in their lives. Just at present we not only do not have the Russian kind of melodrama: the revolt of the employee against the employer; we do not even have the Ibsen kind: the revolt of the middle-class man or woman against the middle-class world.

Dr. Schacht Breaks the Rule

PRICES on the New York Stock Exchange, German political disorders, reparations, war debts and the American elections of this week—a curious medley of factors and events. Their interdependence is set forth with remarkable clearness and candor from the point of view of Wall Street and Washington in an editorial appearing in last week's number of The Commercial and Financial Chronicle.

The victory of the moderate elements in the Reichstag on Sunday, October 19, is given credit for a "sharp and general rise" on the New York Exchange the following day. "Unfortunately, the good effects were vitiated the same night when Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, former head of the German Reichsbank, speaking before the Foreign Policy Association, indulged in some further lamentations

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regarding the unfortunate condition of Germany and the need for an early revision or suspension of German reparations payments. The consequence was that on Tuesday morning the stock market slid back again and showed renewed manifestations of weakness."

Then Dr. Schacht is taken severely to task. Although it is admitted that "he speaks in a temperate way," The Chronicle finds "his remarks are, nevertheless, ill timed and ill advised." Their fundamental veracity is not challenged, but it is observed that "at such a time [as the present, of course] it is very ungracious, to say the least, for Dr. Schacht to go touring through the United States making addresses and stressing the alleged unfortunate position of Germany."

We have understood for some time past that our much vaunted prosperity, of which the stock market is the official barometer, must have unceasing words of optimism from all public figures in this country about our own situation. We are now learning that our prosperity hangs by such a slender thread that it is endangered whenever a distinguished foreign guest in our midst expresses, even "in a temperate way," an admittedly honest and highly competent opinion about unfavorable conditions in his own land. Apparently Dr. Schacht must conform to the code governing public utterances of our own prominent men in respect to economic conditions.

The Financial Chronicle then goes on to explain almost disingenuously the grounds for its concern. "The matter is a serious one." We are now "suffering from an intense business depression," consequently "the yield of the federal income taxes the coming year is certain to be reduced." A cut in the income from foreign-debt payments would put our government in "an unfortunate plight."

Furthermore, and this is perhaps the most important basis for anxiety, "the country is now facing a congressional election." The government "has against it depression for which it is not responsible . . . the new tariff law, for which it is responsible, and the unsuccessful working of the Federal Farm Loan Act, for which it is likewise responsible." It is then stated that if there arose a widespread belief that the administration favors a modification or reduction of the Allied payments to the United States, the administration "would certainly incur the risk of overwhelming defeat." It is, therefore, strongly recommended that Washington should make it clear that such proposals will never be entertained.

The whole argument is finally clinched by a quotation from the daily word of wisdom of the Sage of Northampton appearing in The New York Herald Tribune of Wednesday, October 22. For him German reparations and war debts are questions that are both settled for all time and wholly unrelated with each other. The United States government has said they were; therefore it must be true. Persons who do not recognize both of these truths "are doing distinct injury to the world economic situation." There are two reasons why these troublesome persons should desist from further discussion of these settled and unrelated questions. The first is that "if reparations are not collected from Germany they must be collected from the taxpayers of the United States." The second reason is that "paying the cost of the War is a moral obligation." The New England pocketbook and Puritan conscience are both invoked to give the quietus to a thoroughly annoying attempt to open questions which are closed and unrelated.

Waiving any discussion of the fundamental questions at issue, which will receive attention in a series of articles on foreign loans beginning in our next week's number, it is of profound interest to note this aggressively closed mind of Wall Street and Washington to certain of the most important facts and occurrences of our present world situation.

The views and recommendations as to reparations and war debts, expressed several years ago by experts such as Keynes in England or Moulton and the Columbia professors in the United States, could be dismissed by our government at that time as so many unsolicited expressions of opinion, based largely on theory rather than on experience. It was then possible for Secretary Mellon to administer official rebuke to such expressions of opinion as obstructions to the foreign policies of our government.

The points advanced today, however—whether by Dr. Schacht or others in this country and throughout Europe—in support of a demand for a reconsideration of reparations and war debts, are no longer to be dismissed as mere opinion or theory. They are very largely points of fact. Economic conditions and unemployment, both in Germany and in England are facts. Colossal budget deficits, estimated for the current year at $500,000,000 in England and $300,000,000 in Germany, are facts. These facts must be faced, not merely by the debtors, but also by the creditors. It is an unfortunate attitude of mind that any government takes when it insists that a past decision as to present and future policy admits of no revision in the light of new facts, present or future.

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EDITORS

BRUCE BLIVEN MALCOLM COWLEY R. M. LOVETT
GEORGE SOULE EDMUND WILSON STARK YOUNG

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

JANE ADDAMS JOHN DEWEY WALDO FRANK
ALVIN JOHNSON E. C. LINDEMAN LEWIS MUMFORD
GILBERT SELDES R. G. TUGWELL LEO WOLMAN

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Gold and the Industrial Depression

A Reply to Mr. E. M. H. Lloyd

I

MR. E. M. H. LLOYD, in last week's New Republic, attributes the current depression solely to scarcity of gold reserves (or scarcity of the currency and credit based upon them). It follows from this premise, as he says, that "the common-sense remedy is more money." If this is true, our deliverance from the curse of industrial depressions is at hand. Mr. Lloyd continues, "It sounds too simple to be true." I fear not only that it sounds too simple, but that it is too simple. At least it is too simple to be the whole truth.

The theory on which it is based, like all simple and logical theories, is attractive. It has been expounded by many eminent economists besides Mr. Lloyd. A brilliant application of it to present conditions was recently made by Sir Henry Strakosch in The London Economist, for instance. The theory is so simple that it has been expressed in an elementary equation, called, in economic jargon, the "equation of exchange." On one side you put the amount of money in use, and the velocity of its circulation. On the other you put the amount of goods and services sold, and the general level of prices. Since everything sold is bought with money (money in this case includes checks and any other means of payment) the money side of the equation must always equal the amount of transactions at the prices at which they occur. So that we may see the logic in all its crystal clarity, let us write the equation:

$$M\,V + M'\,V' = P\,T$$

The amount of money (M) times the velocity of its circulation (V) plus the amount of bank deposits subject to check (M′) times the velocity of their circulation (V′) equals the amount of transactions (T) times the price at which they occur (P).

Now, given an equation like this, the temptation to play with it, as every mathematician knows, is irresistible. You can, for instance, twist its terms around and say:

$$P = \frac{M\,V + M'\,V'}{T}$$

Having done this, you can multiply M V + M′ V′ by 2. Then, if you don't change T, you must also multiply P by 2. This is interpreted to mean, logically enough, that if we double the amount of money without changing the amount of goods, prices must rise to twice their former height. And, if we halve the amount of money, the price must be halved. Mr. Lloyd and those who agree with him argue, in essence, that this is just about what has happened. The amount of money was decreased because gold reserves were inadequate; this forced falling prices; and falling prices brought on the depression.

The only trouble with this sort of reasoning is that those who use it look so hard at the equation that they do not look hard enough at the actual processes of industry and trade which it is supposed to represent. It is easy to multiply or divide M's, V's and P's, more difficult to find out what really happened and why. There is a subtle difference between playing with an equation and tracing causes and events in the world of phenomena. No one could reasonably deny that a shortage of gold *may* cause a fall in prices, and that a fall in prices *may* cause depression; but the question is, did it? Like many attractively simple pieces of logic, this theory tends to blind its advocates to a number of inconveniently complex facts.

II

If we apply the theory to recent economic history in the United States, what should we expect to see? The general scarcity of gold was complicated by its bad distribution. Some nations had too little, others too much. Ours was one of the nations which happened to have an oversupply of gold. According to the orthodox money doctrine, one of two results must have followed. An oversupply of gold makes possible too easy a credit policy by the banks, and an inflation of bank deposits. If this course is pursued, prices rise as the means of payment increase more rapidly than the supply of goods. Production is stimulated, employment and wage payments grow, and we have "prosperity." On the whole everything goes well until credit expansion proceeds so far that rising prices, conferring unequal benefits on various parts of the community, destroy the economic balance, or until the gold supply at last becomes inadequate. Then a stop is put to the process, credit is restricted, purchasing power fails, and we have the reverse process, leading to depression.

If, on the other hand, an oversupply of gold is neutralized by a banking policy which so restricts credit that it does not lead to inflation, we ought, on the basis of the quantity theory of money, to avoid the "prosperity" phase of the cycle alto-

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gether. We could, consequently, continue indefinitely without depression, so far as our domestic production and consumption were concerned. If depression came, it would be the result of scarcity of gold in other nations, accompanied by falling prices and depression there, which would restrict foreign purchases from us. Depression could arrive only by way of a shrinkage in our exports.

It is not quite clear which alternative Mr. Lloyd believes accounts for the depression in this country, although he indicates a belief that our banks did neutralize the gold surplus. As a matter of fact, neither of the pictures fits the years 1923-29 in the United States. Though there were variations from time to time in Federal Reserve policy, most American economists would agree that credit was generally easy throughout the greater part of the period—until well into 1929. Nevertheless, the prices both of commodities and of manufactured articles did not rise on the average. On the contrary, there was a slightly falling trend in our price indexes. The wholesale price index of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, starting at 101 in 1923, went to 98 in 1924, 104 in 1925, 100 in 1926, 95 in 1927, 98 in 1928 and 97 in 1929. Falling prices, according to the simple money theory, ought to cause depression. But they did not do so here, over a period of at least five years. Production kept on growing and aggregate industrial profits kept on swelling in spite of falling prices—though there were moderate interruptions of prosperity in 1924 and 1927. When, in 1929, certain important industries began to produce less—notably automobiles—there had been no sudden collapse of the prices of their products. Nor was a shrinkage of exports responsible. Our depression was not, at least on the surface, initiated either by the puncturing of an inflated balloon of credit and high commodity prices at home, or by deflation abroad.

The picture, of course, is only half painted so long as we leave out the stock market. There is more support for the money theorists in the behavior of Wall Street. According to them, easy money initiated the boom in stock prices. This led to speculative inflation in shares, which was eventually accompanied by very high rates of interest on collateral loans. The bubble was thus burst and deflation followed. But it may be doubted whether easy credit at the beginning really started the boom, and whether tight credit at the end destroyed it. Speculators did not seem to care at any time how much they paid for loans. And much of the speculative credit came, toward the end, not from the banks, but from the unused surplus profits of corporations. It is not obvious that these profits themselves arose from inflation, when the prices of goods had not been rising, and the corporations in question had not been borrowing from banks. They were lenders, not borrowers. Indeed, one of the great puzzles of banking policy had been how to restrict the use of credit in speculation when there was such a seemingly inexhaustible supply of loanable funds in corporation treasuries. In so far as credit scarcity played a part in the stock-market collapse, the trouble was, not so much that the banks withdrew loans, but that the other lenders did so after stock prices had begun to fall so fast that the collateral was no longer considered safe, or when the prospect of a general industrial depression made them want to conserve their resources for other purposes. Bank credit was promptly eased when the industrial loans were withdrawn.

Even if we should admit that the behavior of the stock market was mainly a credit phenomenon, we could scarcely maintain that it was the principal cause of the depression. Industrial production had been dropping some months before the panic occurred. The Federal Reserve Board index of production, adjusted to compensate for seasonal influences, was at its highest point in June, 1929, when it registered 127, and it fell to 124 in July, 123 in August, 122 in September and 117 in October. Diversion of funds to the use of speculators did, it is true, tighten commercial credit during the last stages of the boom. This made it more difficult for the business enterprises which depended directly on bank loans to continue their activity unabated. But few important enterprises did depend on bank loans. The bulk of the country's production was carried on by corporations which had large surplus funds and did not need to borrow. Those wanting more money could easily get it by floating issues of stock, which the market absorbed in unprecedented quantities and at unprecedented prices. Building, it is true, was in the end hampered by scarcity of bank credit. But it was almost as much hampered by scarcity of first-mortgage money, which arises mainly not from credit based on banking reserves, but from savings accounts. Gold supply had no visible effect on these; people were simply using their extra money in order to speculate, or to loan to speculators. In addition, whatever may be maintained as to the impossibility of general overproduction, those who are best informed about building are convinced that this industry at least overproduced in relation to its market. Tight credit was not the sole cause of the building slack and easy credit will not soon restore the building boom of the last decade. The rise of stocks cannot have been the chief cause of industrial trouble.

Nor can the stock panic have brought on the general depression. No doubt it aggravated it, so far as the spirit of hopefulness or gloom plays a part in these movements. But most of the "money" lost in the crash would not have been spent for commodities and services if it had been saved, any more than most of the gains had been so spent before. Speculative profits had largely gone back into new speculation. They were a bubble, never realized in the national income. It is true that the speculators who were hard hit were obliged to economize, but they formed a relatively small por-

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tion of the total number of consumers—speculation was by no means so nearly universal as the common talk of the period would have had us believe.

The simple money theory thus meets perplexing obstacles in the attempt to explain the American part of the depression. Either the slump was preceded here by inflation or it was not. If there was inflation, why was it not accompanied by the rising commodity prices which are supposed to be its sign and result? If we explain the falling prices by saying there was deflation, how can we account for the industrial prosperity which accompanied them, and the stock-market boom? If there was neither inflation nor deflation, why did we not live in the economic heaven of the stable-money theorists? The parts of the puzzle do not seem to fit together on the money hypothesis.

III

Dr. B. M. Anderson of the Chase National Bank and others in this country have maintained all along that in the period of prosperity we were suffering from inflation, though not in the simple sense of undue extension of commercial bank credit directly to business. It came, according to this doctrine, in the form of easy bank loans based on stock and bond collateral, and the actual purchase of securities by the banks themselves. This encouraged the issue of securities faster than the real savings of the country could absorb them. In other words, the banks extended undue credit, not directly to business borrowers, but to those who bought the shares and bonds which business issued. This permitted extensive financing of real estate and building, of industrial expansion, of loans abroad and of instalment purchases by individuals. Prosperity was thus indirectly dependent on an easy-credit policy. Inflation helped to create the profits and the surplus accounts of great corporations which in turn so largely financed the stock-market boom.

This explanation sounds reasonable, but it still does not account for the anomaly of falling commodity prices during the prosperous period.

It may be possible to explain the price anomaly by looking at our equation again and concentrating for a moment on the letter T—in general a much neglected factor in the discussion of the money theorists. Much said so far rests on the tacit assumption that the transactions—the production and sale of goods and services—remained unchanged. As a matter of fact, they did not. Great increase of production was the really outstanding feature of the prosperous period in this country. The production index rose from 101 in 1923 to 118 in 1929. An increase of T, if no increase occurred in the supply of money and credit, would naturally occasion an equivalent decrease of P, or prices. There was a growth in the supply of money and credit, but not enough to prevent some fall in prices, in view of the enormous lift of production. We may then agree with Dr. Anderson that an expansion of credit helped bring the boom, while holding that it was not sufficient to prevent some drop in prices. Whether this process was inflation or deflation, I leave the money theorists to debate.

If Dr. Anderson were right that there was too much expansion of credit, the conclusion seems to be, not that prices fell too far, but that they did not fall far enough. If the orthodox money theorists are right that prices ought not to have fallen at all, then there ought to have been still more credit expansion than there was. Many American economists would hesitate to endorse a theory of economic salvation which would have demanded more credit expansion than occurred in the United States between 1923 and 1929.

There is another logical difficulty in the simple money theory, which is brought to the foreground by Dr. Anderson's particular thesis of inflation. What, under the money theory, can possibly put an end to an industrial boom, if the price average does not rise? Rapidly rising prices, as was demonstrated in the War and post-war booms, may so redistribute the purchasing power of various sections of the community that the economic applecart is eventually upset. But without rising prices, the only thing which could be expected to halt continued expansion of credit and industrial production would be a shortage of the credit base—the bank reserves of gold and government securities. In that case, the obvious remedy would be to get rid of the limitations imposed by the gold standard, and proceed to expand credit indefinitely, so long as prices did not rise. But, in our recent experience, as has been stated above, expansion was not brought to an end by an insufficiency of reserves and a consequent inability to expand credit further. Something else intervened. It is difficult to believe that an infinite expansion of credit could be achieved, even if we got rid of the limitation now imposed by reserves. In our recent crisis, for instance, business failed to borrow more because it had no profitable use for the enormous funds it already had. It could not find sufficient markets. Retail consumers failed to borrow more because they had already borrowed about all they could possibly hope to repay, in view of the incomes they were receiving. The safe borrowing limits of foreign nations and industries had been reached, if not passed.

Thus the theory of inflation without price increase does not wholly account for what happened.

IV

Though there can be no good objection to the "equation of exchange," there may be flaws in the reasoning with which the stable-money theorists have surrounded it—in the way in which they use it. One of these is their frequent tendency to think as if the money part of the equation were the sole factor in which independent variations occur—the one which is the activating cause of all other

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changes. Suppose for a moment we consider the possibility that changes in T, or the factor in which industrial production plays so large a part, may have independent variations and may cause disturbance.

This leads us to the frequently expressed belief that the depression is due to overproduction. To that contention the money theorists reply that there can, according to orthodox economic theory, be no such thing as general overproduction. An addition to supply is, they say, at the same time an addition to demand. Particular commodities may be overproduced in relation to the output of others, but there cannot be simultaneous overproduction of everything. Mr. Lloyd writes:

> One may speak of the overproduction of automobiles in the United States, and possibly of wheat in the world, in the sense that the statistical position reveals an exceptionally large increase in production compared with that of other commodities. If this is the case, then we naturally look for the price to fall somewhat and the production of these particular commodities to slow down until the equilibrium has been restored. But a situation like this has little or nothing in common with depression of trade. In such a case, though the producers of wheat and motor cars would be hit, producers of other commodities and consumers in general would be benefited.

There has been an accumulating surplus of many other commodities—notably building in the United States, sugar, coffee, copper, coal. In each case specific causes may be assigned, apparently having little to do with credit or the price level. Let us grant for the sake of argument that there can be no such thing as general overproduction, in the long run. But let us say that the prices of all these important commodities which have been overproduced must fall and their production must slow down "until equilibrium has been restored." Might not this drastic readjustment be quite enough to cause a general disturbance during the months in which it was proceeding—a disturbance long enough and severe enough to be called a depression?

Mr. Lloyd admits that there can be general overproduction, for a time at least, when he attributes the depression to a general lack of purchasing power. People's wants, he says, are by no means satiated. This, of course, does not apply to specific commodities. People have had enough horseshoes and bustles, enough corsets and carriages. Even the capacity of a population of a given size to eat wheat is limited, no matter how much of it they could buy. The sales of coal do not expand indefinitely with lower prices. The same may be true of coffee and sugar. Demands for copper are set by industrial technique in such a way that a reduction in the price of copper alone might not indefinitely expand its use. Yet the whole world is obviously not yet satiated in its wants for everything. It would buy more, in the aggregate, if it could.

Therefore, we may agree that an increase of purchasing power is desirable. But is it possible to stop with this simple statement? Can we assume that a mere extension of bank credit to the usual beneficiaries of bank credit would turn the trick?

We may be suffering from a bad distribution of purchasing power, just as we may be suffering from a bad allotment of production. The fact is that, whereas productive industry had plenty of money at the end of the boom, the ultimate consumers of industry's products had, many of them, reached the limits of their possible expenditure, both of cash and of credit. It must make some difference where the purchasing power is. The market for houses is for the moment saturated. The people who have enough money to buy houses have all the houses they really want, while there are a great many people who want houses and have not enough money to buy them. The mere existence of ample purchasing power in bank reserves, in corporation treasuries and in the pocketbooks of the richer sections of the community does not mean that they are going to buy all the products which can be made in ever increasing quantities by factories set up to supply the demands of the millions who have smaller incomes. Our increase in production has been largely an increase in mass production; and mass production cannot continue to expand without an equal expansion of mass consumption.

It is sometimes argued that an increase in industrial production automatically brings an equivalent increase in wage payments. Such figures as we have do not bear out this contention. Production of manufactures grew (according to the Federal Reserve Index number) from 101 in 1923 to 119 in 1929. Factory pay rolls grew in the same period only from 103 to 107. Other great departments of production had much the same history. It is true that credit extended to consumers probably expanded during the same period, but the safe expansion of consumers' credit must be limited at some point by the growth of consumers' cash incomes.

Given an amazing technical advance in the ability to produce with a given amount of man-power, extending pretty widely throughout industry, we may at least entertain the hypothesis that the purchasing power of ordinary wage and salary earners, and of farmers, has failed to advance equally with growth or productivity, and that this has created a lack of balance in our economic system—a lack of balance which cannot be remedied merely by extensions of bank credit.

V

It is not the present purpose to outline an alternative explanation of the depression as the final truth. No matter how logical a theory may be, it cannot be accepted without searching inquiry to see how well it fits the facts. Dozens of theories have been advanced to account for the business cycle—

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most of them logically attractive But the unfortunate truth is that careful research into the facts, of the kind which is now being made by the National Bureau of Economic Research under the direction of Dr. Wesley C. Mitchell, has not yet progressed far enough to validate any single theory. Incomplete and tentative as this article must be, it already indicates that the matter is much more complex than Mr. Lloyd believes. If we must have a single phrase to account for what has happened, it is probably near the truth to say that the trouble is lack of sufficient planning and control of the whole economic machine (including, of course, gold supply and banking policy).

Just as a hypothesis subject to further testing, however, we may throw out a sketchily outlined guess, as follows:

1. Technical progress brought about a very rapid increase in ability to produce, per man-hour of labor.

2. The unusual jump in the purchasing power of labor, which had occurred in the United States between 1919 and 1923, for a while stimulated the production of the goods which are consumed by wage earners, and the construction of new factories and machinery to make such goods.

3. From 1923 on, however, the cash incomes of wage earners failed to increase as rapidly as the ability to produce the goods they buy. The cash incomes of farmers likewise failed to increase. Meanwhile, retail prices did not fall enough greatly to enlarge their purchasing power.

4. In this situation, prosperity was kept going by the expansion of credit—instalment and other forms of consumers' credit which stimulated popular purchasing power, credit to speculative building, credit to industries through financing of their capital issues, credit to foreign borrowers who were thus enabled to buy from us.

5. The limit of this expansion was set, partly by the absorption of credit in the stock-market boom, partly by the inability of retail consumers and foreign borrowers to borrow more, their current incomes not having increased sufficiently.

6. Overproduction of wheat and other farm commodities, which had limited the farmers' incomes, continued until a crisis was reached. The same was true of sugar, coffee and other goods which affected the international situation.

7. Possibly a shortage of gold hampered production and profits in Great Britain and certain other nations. Other local weaknesses developed. Perhaps it is true that the war dislocation left Europe in a state of chronic depression, which had been temporarily relieved only by the influx of American loans.

This guess does not bar the possibility that the world has already suffered, and may suffer still more, from a shortage of gold. But it does suggest that attempts to preserve a stable price level by a managed currency would be far from sufficient to prevent a repetition of the catastrophe, and might even make matters worse. For we might, for instance, discover that it is difficult to raise average money wages as rapidly as productivity increases. We might learn that in order to maintain sufficient popular purchasing power we must, at a time when improved technique is increasing production and reducing costs almost everywhere, allow prices to fall. Perhaps the distribution of purchasing power is more at fault than its total amount.

GEORGE SOULE.

Zion for Arabs

THE BRITISH Colonial Office, on October 20, issued Sir John Simpson's report on Palestine and a "White Paper" laying down the government's future policy as mandatory. Immediately afterwards, Chaim Weizmann, president of the Zionist organization, Lord Melchett and Felix Warburg, of the Jewish Agency, resigned in protest against the "cruel and unfair betrayal of the British government of its trusteeship." Two days later Baldwin, Chamberlain and Amery added their weight to the Jewish protests by issuing a letter stating that the new governmental policy "appears to us to conflict not only with the insistence of the Council of the League of Nations . . . but with the whole spirit of the Balfour Declaration and of the statements made by successive governments in the last twelve years."

Only excerpts from the two documents have, at the time of writing, been cabled across the ocean. Yet it is only necessary to recall the Balfour Declaration of 1917 in order to see how the new edict conflicts with the former policy. The phrase *"reconstituting* their national home in that country," employed in the preamble, leaves no ambiguity.

Nor did the British statesmen of the time have any doubts as to what "national home" meant. Lord Balfour, after reminding the Arabs that it was Great Britain who had "freed them from the tyranny of their brutal conquerors," Great Britain who had "established the independent Arab sovereignty of the Hedjaz," added: "I hope that they [the Arabs] will not grudge that small notch in what are now Arab territories being given to the Jewish people." Lord Robert Cecil was equally outspoken, and even Ramsay MacDonald, at that time an M. P. in opposition, had no doubts as to what the promise meant. In 1922 he wrote: "At the same time we were encouraging the Jews to help us by promising them that Palestine would be placed at their disposal for settlement and government."

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But this is 1930. Lord Passfield, spokesman for MacDonald's government, places Palestine "at the disposal of the Jews" by preventing them from acquiring more land and forbidding them to import further colonists to settle upon the land already acquired. "If," the White Paper of 1930 asserts, "there are Arab workmen unemployed, it is not right that Jewish workmen from foreign countries should be imported to fill the existing vacant posts."

There are always unemployed, landless Arabs in Palestine as well as in Irak, Syria, Egypt and New York. Yet so long as there are Arab workmen unemployed in Palestine, no Jews shall be allowed to enter this strip of earth so generously allocated to the Jewish people, even though Jewish capital creates the tasks for which the workmen are needed. Arabs, on the other hand, are not forbidden to enter Palestine and enter it freely.

But the new policy does more than arrest the growth of the Jewish Home at its present stage of development. A state-wide scheme is proposed for developing the entire country. Intensive cultivation is gradually to replace the primitive methods of the native population. According to Sir John Simpson, no land is now available for 29 percent of the Arabs. After these landless Arabs are established, that is to say, after 200,000 nomad and semi-nomad Arabs are installed on irrigated farms, further Jewish immigration will be permitted. As the Arab birth rate is excessively high, their death rate, owing to Jewish sanitary measures, constantly decreasing, as Bedouins are continually sifting in from the desert, a new crop of landless Arabs will doubtless be standing in line even before the first batch has been attended to. Consequently their scheme terminates forever the Jewish hope of populating Palestine.

Furthermore, the development is to be paid for by a bond issue secured by Palestine. This issue will eventually have to be redeemed by the people of Palestine. As taxes are levied now, the Jews provide a disproportionate share of the government's revenue. Thus, the final outcome of the British mandate, if the plans of the White Paper are carried out, will be that some of the money raised in the cities of America and South Africa, even in the ghettos of Middle Europe, for establishing homeless persecuted Jews in the land of their fathers, will be deflected toward providing irrigated fields for indigent Arabs.

Naturally the Jews consider this unfair. They would not object to the British Labor government taking upon itself the task of improving the conditions of the Arabs if only taking care of the Arabs did not arrest the work of the Jews. But the White Paper not only closes Palestine to the Jews, whose condition in many parts of the world is infinitely more desperate than that of the wandering Arabs, but saddles the Jews of Palestine with the partial responsibility of raising an alien, hostile race to their own level.

It is obvious that not only the intention, but even the letter of the Balfour Declaration has been disregarded by Lord Passfield's White Paper. No feat of the imagination can interpret the original promise to mean closing Palestine to the Jews until the wandering nomads within its borders are provided with farms there. What was originally a promise to the Jewish race, with a proviso protecting the civil and religious rights of the Arabs, has been twisted by the Labor government into a general responsibility for the social and economic condition of the present population of Palestine.

The Zionists, exalted by the hope that their long exile was about to end, that thereafter one minute corner of the earth could be looked upon as their home, were naturally thrown into consternation by this unexpected reverse. Immersed in their own idealism, they tend to interpret the government's act as treachery. In 1917, they point out, Great Britain needed Jewish aid to win a war: in 1930, the British Labor government evidently thinks that Britain needs Arab aid to hold an empire. The loyalty of India's 60,000,000 Moslems must be retained even at the expense of a covenant with the Jews. This consideration, though doubtless a factor in the case, may not have been the dominating motive that converted the government, or at least Lord Passfield, to the Arab side. The government's sympathy with the Arabs, even after the gruesome massacre of 1929, may be of simpler origin, the result of a species of sentimentality.

A visitor to Palestine, even a Jewish visitor, is often seduced by the sights and sounds of the Arab village. Over the soft contours of the massed mud huts, the *muezzin* floats like the quavering notes of a lonely bird. Women, swathed in flowing colored robes, with tinkling silver ornaments about their limbs, gossip softly at the well and carry great copper pots to and fro upon their heads. In the fields men labor as in the days of Abraham, with the tools the Bible lists. Flocks of sheep led by rampant distrustful goats pour through crumbling walls. Turbaned figures prostrate themselves before the uncertain deity of the desert. Camels with jingling bells and heavy loads arrest their shuffling gait to wait phlegmatically for a new command. Everything has the beauty of perfect adaptiveness. Two, four, perhaps six thousand years have gone to adjusting each detail of life to the whole. Nothing strikes one as grotesque or ugly. Even the flies, allowed to cluster in the eyes of babies, and the ubiquitous filth, do not particularly disturb the harmony of the scene.

A few miles away a Jewish village thrums with activity. Wooden shacks roofed with tin form an uneven circle. Perhaps one or two square structures of concrete bear witness to the industrial era that is being ushered in. Bespectacled, stoop-shouldered students, bearded ancients who once wore the fur caps of Poland, sturdy *Chalutzim* (pioneers) with bared throats, labor on the roads

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and drive trucks about. Others tend the dairy cows whose stock is being improved by a blooded bull from Hereford. Machinery is in evidence, tractors and concrete mixers. A cubistic white structure in the distance is turning the fall of a river into power. Nearby a modern school, like those of America, teaches children to work by means of play. All is chaotic. Centuries and countries meet and merge about the Jewish settlements. The visitor, before this new thing which possesses the crudity and uncouthness of unfinished creations, is appalled unless he has the will and imagination to envisage what may come out of it. Mt. Tabor, he feels, should not look down on a power plant. The plains of the Philistines ought not to be harrowed by motor-drawn plows.

Swayed by some such emotional reaction, it is not surprising that the Shaw Commission, Sir John Simpson and other British observers should lend sympathetic ears to the spokesmen of the Arabs. They were informed that the condition of the *fellaheen,* whose picturesqueness glorified the somewhat harsh countryside, was deplorable. However, the further fact, presented by the Jews, that the health and living conditions of the *fellaheen* had ameliorated since the advent of the Jews, was more difficult to demonstrate. Nor was it easy to prove that the *effendi,* who had so eloquently expounded the woes of the peasantry, had become wealthy through selling their land at an absurd valuation to the Zionists: that the destitution of the *fellaheen* was due to a feudal economic order which forced the tenants eventually into debt.

The observers, after their cursory visit—and none of the reports was made after a visit of more than a few months—left with the impression of a beautiful primitive people being slowly destroyed by a tough objectionable race who had at their command all the weapons of modern applied science. Not even the fact that the Jews, when land with tenants upon it was bought from an absentee landlord, recompensed the dispossessed *fellaheen,* even though no law demanded it of them, eradicated this impression.

Sir John speaks in his report of the "remarkable progress" of the Jewish settlements due to the energy of the settlers themselves as well as to their advantages of capital, science and organization. The Arab, he adds, has none of these advantages and receives practically no help to improve his cultivation.

This statement is probably the key to the new British policy. Since the Jews of the world look after the Jews of Palestine, British labor has chivalrously decided to look after the neglected Arabs. Instead of permitting (England has never fostered) the return of the Jews to the homeland, the Labor government has chosen to lend its aid to improving the lot of the Arabs already there, and of those other nomad Arabs who, drifting in from the desert, decide to stay.

This new policy is obviously a breach of faith. But that is neither important nor unusual. What does matter is: whether the new policy will accelerate or retard that indefinable progression called the march of humanity. But before taking up this question a few considerations are pertinent.

First: The Arabs possess not only large territorities, such as North Africa and Syria, under suzerainty of European powers, but a peninsula about the size of the United States east of the Mississippi, which they completely control. Besides that, Trans-Jordan, larger than Palestine, better watered and more fertile, with only some 200,000 inhabitants, adjoins Palestine. Thus, the Arabic civilization does not depend on Palestine any more than the civilization of the United States depends on the state of Delaware.

Second: England has a number of Arabic and partly Arabic countries under her control. In no other country but Palestine does she take extraordinary measures to improve the lot of the inhabitants, who generally live in a squalor inconceivable to a European. The *fellaheen* of Irak and of Trans-Jordan are no better off, and probably somewhat worse off, than their fellows in Palestine. Schemes such as Sir John Simpson's are not proposed for these countries because there is no Western Jewish population to make them feasible.

Third: The Jews possess no corner of the earth of their own. In every land they are at most an impotent minority. At the moment their very continuation as a people is hanging in the balance. Palestine, as I recently pointed out in The New Republic, has been more than a refuge for homeless individuals. Zionism, the effort and joy of realizing the ancient dream, has been an elixir to the dispersed, demoralized race, belatedly making the transition between the Middle Ages and the Twentieth Century. Nor has the need of a refuge become less urgent than it was at the time of the Balfour Declaration. In Central Europe the Jewish multitudes are being extinguished by a new and subtle form of starvation. No function is being left them in the social body. Taxation, of a carefully devised character, is forcing them into bankruptcy from which, unlike their Gentile neighbors, they cannot escape by day labor. Jewish workmen are not employed. In the West, Jews for the present are individually safe. But the forces of absorption will undoubtedly prove as effective, in a century or two, in destroying their cultural identity, as the malignant hostility of the East.

The full realization of the policy inaugurated by Passfield's White Paper would mean the lifting of the poverty of the Arab *fellaheen* in one small corner of the great Arabian territory. It is conceivable that the amelioration of the Arab peasant's lot would be conducive to an Arabian cultural renaissance, but it is most unlikely. Arabs have shown little of their ancient genius in the last six hundred years. The British policy will perhaps

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help preserve for a short time the Biblical flavor of the Holy Land, but even that is doomed. Gasoline tins are rapidly replacing copper and earthen pots. Haifa is destined to be a great port. Arabs seize upon motor cars, phonographs and demagogy with more avidity than the Jews. Palestine, like the rest of the Near East, will sooner or later succeed in mimicking the West. Even the one good the new policy seeks to realize may well be realized by the old policy. For the Jews must raise the Arab way of life in order to live in peace with the Arab, and the more successful the Jews are in making the territory economically self-sufficient, the more the Arabs will benefit. Even now the Arabs have the advantage of Jewish medical care and Palestine is just at the beginning of its development. The Jewish people cannot cease their efforts until the whole of the Near East is revitalized.

The full realization of the program inaugurated by the original Balfour Declaration means that a Jewish culture would, for the first time in two thousand years, have a land of its own in which to unfold. In the early centuries of our era, the Jews of Mesopotamia had, for a considerable period, conditions sufficiently favorable for them to pick up the threads of their cultural life. The result was the Talmud and much else that is lost. In the Middle Ages the Jews of Spain and Southern France had, for a short time, enough peace and security for them to devote themselves to matters of the spirit.

In the last few centuries small communities of Jews in many lands have been released from the physical bondage of ghetto walls and from the distraction of recurrent pogroms. But Jews of today, even more than those of past ages, do not function as whole Jews. Their heritage is divided, and the heritage of their foster nation is usually more important to them than that of their ancient race. The homeland, as conceived, was to be a place where the Jewish individual talent could function in Jewish surroundings, where the genius of the race could once more contribute to the wealth of nations, where the pick of the Eastern people, impregnated with the marvelous cultural acquisitions of the West, could once more apply itself to its traditional and still vital problem: the establishment of the "good life" on earth.

If this is a fair presentation of the possibilities of Passfield's and Balfour's conflicting programs, there is little question as to which program the civilized world would choose. And it concerns the entire civilized world, even legally, because it is the civilized world which gave the mandate to Great Britain. Approval of Passfield's policy is not found anywhere among the informed. Not even the Arabs are satisfied. To the Zionist the White Paper is a betrayal. The English Conservatives are deploring the blot on the honor of their country. To liberals the world over—even to such as are indifferent to Zionism—perhaps the most distressing feature of the situation is that the Colonial Office, by its submission to Arab demands, disproves Norman Angell's theory that war does not pay. It seems to have been left to a Labor government to prove that massacre does. HAROLD LOEB.

The Redmongers Go West

THE FISH Congressional Committee to investigate Communist activities have finally visited and fully investigated the city of the Angels. After several days of exhaustive investigations in Seattle and San Francisco, the Committee arrived in Los Angeles on the morning of October 8 and immediately began their two-day session. Behind a long table, littered with newspapers and memoranda, sat the five congressmen in the most genial informality possible. Three members of the Committee smoked incessantly, as did the audience and the witnesses, the reporters and the court personnel. Congressman John E. Nelson, pleasantly thoughtful and bald, sported a red carnation in his buttonhole. Congressman E. S. Eslick, from Tennessee, wore a very high, white collar with a snappy, black bow tie of the kind popular in pre-bellum days. During the testimony almost every committeeman used the adjacent cuspidors with astounding regularity and a deadly aim.

Many witnesses appeared before the Committee. They were procured through the good offices of the Better America Federation, an organization of bitter anti-radical, anti-liberal and anti-union proclivities, subsidized by the wealthiest, if not the best, citizens of the city. Virtually all the witnesses were "for the prosecution." A few liberals, members of the Civil Liberties Union, were permitted to testify, but not one Communist.

Lieutenant-Colonel Leroy F. Smith, director of the speakers' bureau of the Better America Federation, was the first witness. He presented a hair-raising picture of the extent of radical and communistic activities. The Communist party, the Civil Liberties Union, the League to Abolish Capital Punishment, the Farmer-Labor party and several anti-militarist organizations were described by Colonel Smith as being Communist groups. He testified that from 85 to 90 percent of all Communists were foreign born and that local Communists had secretly imported 20,000 rifles into the city from Mexico to be used for dire revolutionary purposes.

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Principal Thomas A. Elson, of the Roosevelt High School, located in the Jewish quarter of the town, took the stand next and displayed a choice selection of circulars which had been distributed in and around the school. He said there were from fifty to a hundred students in the high school who were suspected of being Communists. He also wished to call the Committee's attention to the activities of the Young Atheists' Society—"merely another Communist organization." As chairman of the legislative committee of the Los Angeles Teachers' Association, he would urge the passage of a state law making the granting of high-school diplomas contingent on "good citizenship as well as good scholarship." Principal Elson then told of his refusal to grant a high-school diploma to Max Rosenstein, a boy who was admittedly proficient in his studies, but who had confessed, in May, 1929, that he was a Communist.

Principal Elson asserted that his right to deny a diploma to Rosenstein had been sustained by both the Board of Education and the local courts. He told of the arrest and conviction of a number of young Communists near the school grounds for speaking without a permit and rioting. He did not mention the fact that the appellate court had reversed the decision. He thought that several of the city's high schools were slightly contaminated with Communism.

Arthur Wainess, a representative of the American Legion, a young, ebullient gentleman of Jewish extraction, told a heart-rending tale of his efforts to organize a branch of the Legion in Boyle Heights, a district of Los Angeles, which he called a "hotbed of Reds." The Communists had threatened his organization, but he had bravely refused to be intimidated. He said he had visited the summer camp of the Communists in Yucaipa Valley as a representative of the Legion, that the sanitary conditions were appalling and that the way the radicals dressed there was a public scandal. He blushingly declared that the attire of one young lady in particular "was disgustin'. She only had one dress on. And when I told her, she said it was none of my business."

Mr. Wainess revealed a most shocking and deplorable state of affairs in the city schools. He said that the Communists were very active and that he knew a teacher in one of the suburbs of Los Angeles who, having fallen prey to Communist propaganda, was recently forced to resign from the public schools. . . . Mr. Wainess was very fluent and the Committee accorded him the most obsequious attention. He proudly informed them that "the motter of the Legion was 'For God and Country,' " and that Legionnaires wanted the immediate deportation of all Soviet radicals, the confiscation of all their property and the deprivation of all the rights of every native-born Communist. . . . Congressman Bachman interjected that this might be contrary to the Constitution. Mr. Wainess could not imagine why. In wartime traitors were shot at sunrise. Why shouldn't they be shot at sunrise in times of peace? Treason is treason, Mr. Wainess sternly observed, and then brought his testimony to a close with the ringing peroration that "Unless we wake up, ten years from now we'll realize how much we've been asleep."

Thus ended the first triumphant day of the Fish Committee's investigation. Lieutenant W. F. Hynes, of the intelligence department of the Los Angeles police, head of the "Red Squad," began his testimony on the second day, after Chairman Fish had read a gratifying dispatch from Boston stating that the American Legion had voted that the Committee's recommendations should be accepted by Congress. . . . Before Congressman Fish lay a vast collection of important data which the police had captured in their gallant war against the revolution. As a matter of fact, almost all the leaflets, circulars, pamphlets, stickers and brochures which Lieutenant Hynes had captured could have been obtained by anyone without the slightest difficulty. Lieutenant Hynes apparently forgot to mention this fact. . . . He assured the Committee that the Communists were becoming a serious problem with the police and that members of the force who tried to break up unlawful assemblies had been basely assaulted by male radicals and "scratched by women radicals."

Had Lieutenant Hynes any recommendations to make to the Committee? He certainly had. He desired, among other things, a special legislative enactment for the registration, surveillance and fingerprinting of foreigners; he wanted special federal police for the curbing of Communist activity throughout America; he wanted "pitiless publicity" for everyone guilty of treasonable actions, and finally, if all else failed, a federal criminal syndicalist law.

Chairman Fish arose and complimented the officer for having compiled the best and most comprehensive report in existence.

Fred W. Beetson, treasurer and secretary of the Motion Picture Producers' Association, and the West Coast representative of the Will Hays organization, gave and elicited some astonishing testimony concerning Bolshevik propaganda in the films, censorship and kindred problems.

Mr. Beetson was asked whether he had any knowledge of "propaganda films" being shown in the United States. No, he had not. Did he know of a Russian director named Eisenstein? He had heard of him. Whom was he employed by? The Paramount-Publix interests. Did Mr. Beetson know that Eisenstein was going to make a picture in Hollywood. Yes, Mr. Beetson had heard something about it. What picture? He believed it was "The American Tragedy." The American what? "The American Tragedy"—a novel. Chairman Fish declared he had never heard of the book and didn't know if it contained Communist propaganda or not. Did Mr. Beetson know if Eisenstein

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was making films of a propagandist nature? No, Mr. Beetson did not. "Do you think," asked Congressman Nelson, "that you'd recognize Communist propaganda if you saw it?" Mr. Beetson doubted if he could, but he assured the Committee that Eisenstein "will never be permitted to make a propaganda film in America. . . . We have all the machinery necessary to suppress Communistic propaganda in 'The American Tragedy.' "

B. E. Montgomery, an oil driller, told a long rambling story of one year's sojourn in Soviet Russia. He said he had been defrauded of $1,500 by the Soviet government. There were 500,000—no, he meant 200,000, homeless children running all over the streets of Moscow. Had he seen 200,000? He must remember he was under oath. No, he hadn't seen them, but he "had been told." He said that conditions were horrible and that everyone was starving. If any person came from Russia and said that it was prosperous, he was nothing but a paid agent. . . . The Committee listened with rapt attention.

At six o'clock in the evening, shortly before the end of the investigation, Dr. Clinton J. Taft was permitted to speak, but he was told to make it brief. He asked for the same courtesy that had been accorded to the many opponent witnesses who had preceded him. He said that the integrity of the American Civil Liberties Union had been impugned by nearly all the witnesses. Surely, it was only fair. . . .

"Go on, what are you waiting for!" shouted Congressman Nelson.

"You've wasted twenty minutes as it is," added Congressman Bachman.

Dr. Taft wanted to read the list of the prominent members at the head of his organization. The Committee could see no use in that. They knew all about his organization. Continual heckling. Dr. Taft insisted upon reading at least a few names in the list. John Dewey, Felix Frankfurter, Jane Addams. . . .

"Is she a Communist?" interrupted Bachman.

Then a barrage of questions. Did the Civil Liberties Union advocate violence? Did it defend those who advocated violence? Weren't there a lot of Communists at the head of the organization? . . . Dr. Taft, now decidedly flustered by the animosity manifested against him, tried his best to explain the purposes of the Civil Liberties Union. He denied he was a Communist and, after renewed interruptions, finally gave up.

A few moments were accorded to Upton Sinclair, who related in a quiet voice his experience several years ago during the longshoremen's strike in San Pedro, now a part of Los Angeles; how he was arrested for attempting to read the first paragraph of the Constitution of the United States in a vacant lot; how hundreds of people were arrested and thrown into the crowded "tank" of a fetid jail; how embittered the men became against the government and the authorities. Sinclair believed that police brutality was the means of making violent revolutionaries. He said that the local "Communist danger" was no danger at all. There was only a mere handful of very voluble Communists.

Colonel Leroy Smith, of the Better America Federation, who had opened the session of the previous day, was permitted to conclude the investigation by giving the recommendations of his organization. The day following the conclusion of the investigation, the Committee were royally entertained by prominent officers of the Better America Federation, the American Legion, and the Chamber of Commerce, and then, with their portfolios stuffed with evidence of the great Red plot against the sacred institutions of this country, the Fish Committee set forth to convene later in Washington to study the tons of evidence they have so painstakingly collected and to make their recommendations to Congress.

CONRAD SEILER.

Washington Notes

AS THE distribution requirements of a great journal of opinion with a large national circulation make it necessary to write this particular piece just before the election and print it just after, both prophecy about and analysis of the result are effectively debarred. About all left for a crafty interpreter of politics, as some of our leading Washington correspondents now refer to themselves, is erudite discussion of the issues and conduct of the campaign.

Inasmuch, however, as the election-day verdict, with its ensuing carnage of senatorial and House candidates and its significance for the future will have been rendered, it does seem that issues and management are colorless things of which to talk. It seems better to turn to personalities, always more interesting than principles. Many more or less conspicuous persons in politics will be affected by the result. The careers of a considerable number will have been brought to an abrupt close. Some new and interesting figures will appear upon the congressional stage. Several of our conspicuous party managers will look supremely foolish; others will appear as seers who were able to forecast clearly the temper of the American people.

The individual, however, upon whom the outcome Tuesday should have the most political effect is, of course, the occupant of the White House, Mr. Hoover. While prohibition has furnished the undertone of the campaign, Mr. Hoover and his administration have been made the national issues so far as the national managers on each side could do so. It will be interesting to see how he takes the result. If the House should be captured by the Democrats it will be a major political blow to him—the worst he has had.

Only twice in a century has the party in power lost control in the off year. Each time it has been followed by loss of the presidency. Alibi it as they will, such a result will be generally construed as a popular repudiation—not

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necessarily a crushing one, but significant. On the other hand, if the Republicans retain a majority sufficient to re-elect the Speaker, regardless of their House and Senate gains, the Democratic disappointment will be deep. It will be an indication that, notwithstanding a business slump, unemployment, an unpopular tariff and the normal back swing, the country is not ready to turn the government over to their party to run.

Reports about Mr. Hoover's frame of mind the past week have been of a conflicting nature. Some not exactly friendly fellows tell me that he has been greatly depressed, that he is moody and miserable. He is said to have developed a strong persecution complex and thinks in the Fess-Wood terms of a Raskob plot to besmirch him. Others make a different report. One man, not friendly either, whom he called a few days ago to talk about the unemployment problem, told me Mr. Hoover seemed well enough to him, not at all low in his mind, and not more worried than any other President would be under existing business conditions. From his friends you hear that Herbert is serene, happy, confident of the future.

The truth, of course, is that anyone who wants to get an impression of a despondent Hoover can easily do so by talking to him. Under no circumstances does he ever seem jolly. His is not naturally a sunshiny nature. He is essentially serious, sensitive, shy. My belief is that if the result is adverse to him he has sufficient philosophy not to be any more deeply downcast than he is now, and that, if the returns can be construed as a "vindication," rather than a "repudiation," he will not give any outward evidences of joy.

His extreme and undoubted sensitiveness to criticism I ascribe to two reasons. The first is that he is unused to it. Until he became a candidate for the presidential nomination in 1928 he had never received any. He had never run for, or occupied, a public office toward which criticism was directed. On the contrary, all of his public activities, before the War, during the War and afterwards, had brought him columns of newspaper praise—some of it overpraise, but not a word of criticism. The second reason is that, though he is now a Republican and a party man, he is not, was not, and never will be inherently a Republican, a real party man or a real party President. He is not the sort of Republican, for example, his predecessor is. Mr. Coolidge took every criticism of himself as President or presidential candidate as inspired by a Democrat and merely part of the political game. Had he been attacked by a Republican paper it would have upset him. Criticism from Democrats did not even interest him.

With Hoover it is vastly different. He has no such party idea to put on as armor. Inasmuch as he came close to being a Democrat himself and is Republican only under compulsion and not through taste, he shrinks not only from Republican, but from Democratic attack. It is a ridiculous state of mind and it is absurd that he does not get over it.

He knows this is a party government and he knows he was elected by the Republican party. What does he expect the Democrats to do? Kiss him? He ought to know enough politics by this time to realize that they are going to kick him just as often and as hard as they can. Furthermore, they would be silly not to. Yet, Mr. Hoover is deeply disappointed every time a Democratic spokesman or a Democratic paper misinterprets his intentions, puts him in a false position, blames him for something he did not do, fails to credit him with something he did.

Conscious of his good intentions and the genuineness of his personal desire to promote the public welfare, apparently he thinks the Democrats should treat him during the present business situation the way a minority party is expected to treat a President when the country is at war. Of course, Mr. Hoover knows perfectly well that, if party positions were reversed, his party would be hammering and hamstringing a Democratic President just as the Democrats are hammering and hamstringing him. And they will continue to do so no matter what the result of this election. To expect anything else is to expect them to be more than human. And these particular attacking Democrats are the most human fellows you ever saw.

T. R. B.

Washington.

Roar China

Roar China, by S. M. Tretyakov. Martin Beck Theater. October 26, 1930.

FOUR OR five seasons ago, and for a little after that perhaps, we had a good deal of talk about the theory of the theater, what the theater art essentially is, and a good many experiments, "Processional," for example, or "The Hairy Ape," or Moscow importations. Lately we have subsided from all that. We have been beating the game as best we could, mostly with chitter and chatter that might as well have been on the printed page. The connection of the theater with literature is obvious, since a part of the theater art consists of words. But what we have been getting is certainly not literature; most of it is journalism, or at best magazine writing; and as theater most of it is negligible.

Some composers know that words in song or opera are a different matter from the printed word; and in the same way there are those who know that words in the theater are organically another thing from printed words. With ideas the case is the same. The theater, since it belongs to the crowd and not to the individual, since it speaks on one occasion only and through the many mediums that make up the one theatrical medium, is bound to a simpler statement and, in detail at least, to simpler ideas, than literature is or private conversation. It therefore struggles between two extremes. At one extreme we have vulgarity, the expression of an idea or sentiment in blatant, raw, yellow terms, or simplicity to the point of gentle idiocy and plausible emptiness, or else so belated a statement of ideas that people who have been familiar with them for a decade cannot at this late day bring themselves to any dramatic response. At the other extreme we have a statement of ideas, however simple or familiar to many, that is complete, engaging, set out with the full reality, warmth and projection that the theater medium can give to them. Toward this the theater of the larger and more important significance moves. It is exactly here that the Guild's new

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production is in the nature of a true theater and so becomes a highly interesting item in the season.

The new piece—said to be a favorite at Meyerhold's famous Moscow theater—consists of diverse scenes, all on a quay in Wan Hsien and on the deck, beside the quay, of His Majesty's battleship, the "Europa," the summer of 1926, when the incident on which the play is based occurred. The scene opens with the Chinese boatman, they serve a dealer of their own race, and through him the American buyer of furs. There is an old hag who buys and sells girls, and at the moment negotiates Ho Sung's daughter, at six dollars, for the American newspaper man. The American, after a parley aboard the British ship with an English fur dealer, coming to little beyond antagonism and spite, gets into an argument with the boatman on his way to shore, and in the heat of it stands up, falls overboard and drowns. Ho Sung's boat it is. There is a great hue and cry, the American tourists, the English and the naval officers on the "Europa" take this up as a native insult, a martyr, and so forth and so on, with the usual nationalistic and white-man's-burden mottoes. At length the captain demands that either the murderer be found or two of the boatman's guild be executed by way of retribution, vindication or perhaps some phrase that is handsomer and more Kiplingesque. The *Daoyin* comes aboard, with an American-educated student as interpreter—a fine dramatic motive having the student, with his Western cultivation heightening his Chinese feelings—to try conciliations; the captain makes his demand; another visit is made, acceding to the whole terms, in order to prevent the bombardment of the city. Night passes. The boatmen at last draw lots. There are some not very distinct indications of Ho Sung's daughter's love affair with one of them. Ho Sung's wife and child come, he is not to be found. Two of the men are strangled, in the presence of the captain and some of the foreigners. A revolt flares among the boatmen, the police come, along with telegrams from Shanghai reporting a rising there, and the immediate departure of the "Europa" is ordered. The riot increases, the play ends with shots firing at the bridge of the battleship, and darkness.

Meanwhile the setting has not been changed, the curtain has not descended since the beginning of the play. We have the dark background, far off, the hulk of the gray battleship in the center of the stage and bearing down upon us, prow, bridge, guns and all. On the water around the ship float the little Chinese boats, each with its painted cabin and its glowing, squarish sails. On the quay, which is built out into the orchestra of the theater two or three rows, the coolies are present, some of them at least, during the whole of the play. The diverse scenes are marked by the crowding up of these sails—which move on actual water with all the advantage of its happy rhythms—or by their departure, the battleship behind them. The changes in light, and the mass motion of the coolies, sometimes standing, sometimes lying flat, sometimes rising, are also used for marking the scenes.

This brings us back to the matter of ideas and theater writing. Tretyakov's play as a whole has undoubtedly a certain strong effect; the impression it leaves is unified in a certain continuity, violent pressure, pity, and in an ironical sarcasm to the point of caricature now and again. The scenes on the battleship, for example, are all written in an expressionistic technique, speeches simplified and underscored to the point of burlesque, and yet not burlesque because of their typicality and their place in the drama. The speeches of the Chinese coolies are of the heroic count, simple lines making up a pattern. All this, good or bad, is at least fundamental theater; it is in this respect that "Roar China" is a valuable reminder for us all, and a worthwhile adventure for the Theater Guild.

That this play is vague and somewhat muddled at times, blurring its course and losing some of its grip, would be obvious to everybody. The dramatist will, of course, get most of the blame for that. As a matter of fact, the vagueness is largely due to the production, the directing and the acting.

In the many boatmen scenes, for instance, no little of the point is lost at times. The scenes rest with the Chinese, who make up more than half of the company; and we cannot demand of them, as supers, the expertness of actors trained to our stage—though this expertness is largely mythical so far as our stage crowds go, and in this particular play the lack of it is emphasized only by the unusual amount of necessary dramatic matter that is left to the crowd. The result is that various motivations are smudged as the play moves forward. The sweeping emotion of the scene where the coolies draw lots as to the two who shall die is all lost. Only very excellent acting in the whole lot of them could make that really moving, and the writhing and grimacing that Mr. Biberman has directed into these honest Chinese workers is soon emptied; the time allowed the scene, as it stands now, is, therefore, hopelessly long. The little scene where we are to learn that Ho Sung's daughter, about to be handed over to the American journalist, has already a lover among the boatmen, is almost completely lost; if nothing else could be done about it, the two persons could be picked out in light, frankly and definitely.

In sum, what the whole production needs is more, never less, stylization. Mr. Biberman's directing is often too noisy—must the captain bray and roar whenever he opens his mouth, throughout the play; must not the coolies concentrate into more intensity and less noise at times?—and lacks too often the needed variety of emphasis—in sound, movement, timing, ebb, flow, surprise—which is one of the theater's strongest means of expression. Mr. Lee Simonson, in his daring and effective setting, could use light and dark more sharply and emphatically. The degree of realism expended upon this Russian play measures almost entirely the degree of vagueness in it. Its pattern should be scored out and traced throughout for us by the glare and beat of stylization. By this means its full quality will best appear, its bold, sharp markings and clear divisions. And thus the credit of its producers will be most apparent.

Among the foreigners, Mr. Erskine Sanford and Miss Eva Condon as the tourist couple, and some of the other players, gave good enough performances, nobody very impressive. Mr. Sam Kim, the Chinese actor, as the *Daoyin* of the city, played with the right nobility and style. His contrast to the fatuous, bullying foreigners put the last knife into the play's tragic sarcasm.

STARK YOUNG.

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FOUR POEMS

A Song for Music

Come let me sing into your ear;
Those dancing days are gone,
All that silk and satin gear;
Crouch upon a stone
Wrapping that foul body up
In as foul a rag;
I carry the sun in a golden cup
The moon in a silver bag.

Curse as you may I sing it through:
What matter if the knave
That the most could pleasure you,
The children that he gave,
Are somewhere sleeping like a top
Under a marble flag;
I carry the sun in a golden cup
The moon in a silver bag.

I thought it out this very day,
Noon upon the clock,
A man may put pretense away
Who leans upon a stick,
May sing, and sing until he drop,
Whether to maid or hag,
I carry the sun in a golden cup
The moon in a silver bag.

Cracked Mary and the Dancers

I found that ivory image there
Dancing with her chosen youth,
But when he wound her coal-black hair
As though to strangle her, no scream
Or bodily movement did I dare,
Eyes under eyelids did so gleam;
Love is like the lion's tooth.

When she, and though some said she played
I said that she had danced heart's truth,
Drew a knife to strike him dead
I could but leave him to his fate;
For no matter what is said
They had all that had their hate;
Love is like the lion's tooth.

Did he die or did she die?
Seem to die or died they both?
God be with the times when I
Care not a thraneen for what chanced
So that I had the limbs to try
Such a dance as there was danced—
Love is like the lion's tooth.

Cracked Mary and the Bishop

Bring me to the blasted oak
That I, midnight upon the stroke,
All find safety in the tomb,
May call a curse out of the sky
Ere the one or t'other die,
None so old as he and I:
The solid man and the coxcomb.

Nor was he bishop when his ban
Banished Jack the Journeyman,
All find safety in the tomb,
Nor so much as parish priest,
Yet he, an old book in his fist,
Cried that we lived like beast and beast:
The solid man and the coxcomb.

The bishop has a skin, God knows,
Wrinkled like the foot of a goose,
All find safety in the tomb,
Nor can he hide in holy black
The heron's hunch upon his back,
But a birch tree stood my Jack:
The solid man and the coxcomb.

Set me by that oak, for he
That had my virginity
All find safety in the tomb
Wanders out into the night
And there is shelter under it,
But should that other come, I spit:
The solid man and the coxcomb.

Cracked Mary Reproved

I

I care not what the sailors say;
All those dreadful thunderstones,
All that storm that blots the day
Can but show that heaven yawns;
Great Europa played the fool
That changed a lover for a bull.
Fol de rol, fol de rol.

II

To round that shell's elaborate whorl,
Adorning every secret track
With the delicate mother-of-pearl,
Made the joints of heaven crack;
So never hang your heart upon
A roaring, ranting journeyman.
Fol de rol, fol de rol.

W. B. YEATS.

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CORRESPONDENCE

In Defense of Marcus Graham

SIR: This is to inform you that New York has formed a branch of the Marcus Graham Defense Committee with headquarters at 317 East Twentieth Street. It is planning the distributing of leaflets which will inform the public of the case of Robert Parsons, better known as Marcus Graham, compiler of "An Anthology of Revolutionary Poetry," who has been imprisoned in California and illegally conveyed to Yuma, Arizona, where he was incarcerated in three different jails and is now threatened with deportation by the United States government. He is charged with having been across the Mexican border without the permit required for aliens—an accusation wholly without foundation. And with having a copy of "An Anthology of Revolutionary Poetry," which is a legally copyrighted anthology of the world's leading poets ranging from Euripides through Shakespeare to the editor of Vanity Fair. The Civil Liberties Union is handling his defense.

Outside of distributing leaflets, the New York branch will solicit signatures (to Honorable Harry Hull, Commissioner General of Immigration, Department of Labor, Washington, D. C., in whose hands the case now rests) of people who demand the immediate release of Robert Parsons. It will also solicit funds and announce its formation at all labor and poetry organizations. . . .

RAE RUSKIN,
New York City. Marcus Graham Defense Committee.

The Senatorial Menace to the Press

SIR: As every one knows, the Nye Senatorial Committee has warned newspapers that if they continue to print Mrs. McCormick's unproved assertions that agents for the Committee criminally tapped her telephone wires and rifled her correspondence files, they will be equally liable with her to an action for libel. The New York Evening Post, under the heading, "Threatening the Press," says:

> In other words, a senatorial committee . . . now seeks to suppress evidence and charges in the public press. We believe this to be contrary to the public welfare. It is another attempt improperly to extend senatorial power.

We must by all means have a free press, and if the libel laws are an invasion of its liberty, let them be repealed on behalf of The Evening Post. I had not realized before that they were passed to extend senatorial power. This newspaper says in its masthead that its design "is to diffuse among the people correct information on all interesting subjects." If correct, this editorial is most interesting. . . .

SILAS BENT.

Sound Beach, Conn.

A Protest

SIR: I have a complaint to make.

It seems to me that Jeffrey Mark, in his review of my book, "New Musical Resources," in The New Republic of October 1, has misquoted from the book by not giving the entire context, and thereby makes out the passage quoted to have the very opposite meaning from that which it has in the book. He quotes the passage, "This is a meter of 2 1/7, since an accented note will be followed by one and one-seventh unaccented notes. One measure of such meter will contain two 49-225ths notes plus one 7-225ths note . . . ," in order to show that many of the theories discovered in the book are of no practical value. One is therefore led to believe that I in the book expounded the quoted theory as having possible value. As a matter of fact, I used the passage in the book to illustrate the *impracticality* of carrying on a certain mathematical process to such absurd lengths, and gave the quoted excerpt as an example of the impossible and ridiculous musical complexity which would result from too rigid a mathematical concept. The passage is introduced in the book as follows: "The formation of a metrical scale in which C equals a constant meter entails considerations of such meters as are too complex for practical purposes," the meter quoted being given as an example of the too complex meters.

I do not mind Mr. Mark's saying that the mathematical concepts are "arbitrary and personal," although I had always supposed that nothing could be more inevitable or impersonal than mathematical conclusions. The twisting about of the meaning of a quoted passage from the book seems, however, unfair.

HENRY COWELL.

Menlo Park, Calif.

Homage to Michael Gold

SIR: I turned with hope to Michael Gold's review of Thornton Wilder's books and plays in the Fall Literary Section of The New Republic of October 22, thinking to find a new interpretation or at least an appreciation of Wilder's contribution. I find, instead, that the reviewer attacks Wilder because he does not visualize America and its needs as Michael Gold sees them. Loud in his interest in our laboring class and its welfare, Mr. Gold with sharp invectives denounces Wilder's subject matter. Wilder is "fleeing his community" because he writes of ancient Greece, Italy or Peru. Mr. Gold does not realize that Wilder is concerned with universal problems, true of any people, true to any time—problems of love and death and the search for happiness. . . .

Furthermore, the reviewer is not concerned with art and fails to recognize it in Wilder. True, taking Gold's theme, instead of his own, Wilder's quiet prose would be out of place and Gold's own blood and thunder would be thoroughly in tune. . . . What after all, is the function of the book reviewer? Is not his concern style and pattern rather than subject matter and the life of the author?

New York City. CHARLOTTE VAUGHAN.

SIR: The review of Thornton Wilder's works by Michael Gold is as shallow, unreasonable and spiteful a thing as I have ever seen. May I ask what critical value comes from having a third-rate author review the works of a first-rate author?

New York City. FRANCIS DOVER.

SIR: It seems to me that the Wilder review by Mr. Michael Gold is typical of the unfortunate biased attitude of the writer. I have all respect for Mr. Gold and his work, but it strikes me that with his capitalist-communist complex he is as utterly unqualified to judge Mr. Thornton Wilder's work as the average man of the street. . . .

The article in question certainly seems to contribute little to our literature on Wilder, and it strikes me that Mr. Gold, with his passion for realism, has escaped the admirable interweaving of realism and romanticism which makes "The Cabala" and "The Bridge of San Luis Rey" important novels. Mr. Wilder cannot honestly be expected to insert an appendix suggesting an easy escape from capitalism. Mr. Gold seems hurt because of the omission.

AUGUST W. DERLETH.

Minneapolis, Minn.

SIR: Did you inadvertently put Mr. Gold's tirade against Thornton Wilder in the wrong section of The New Republic? It was an excellent outburst by a man with a myopic view of Communism against another man who is not ashamed of having an understanding of the world beyond his own confines of time and place. The article is scarcely a book review at all.

In the first place, Mr. Gold limits most of his invectives to a discussion of subject matter, while hinting that Ella May and beet-field workers are immune to emotions not directly connected with the narrow interpretations of Communism retailed by Michael Gold. Granted that subject matter is the criterion for judging literature . . . cannot chaotic Americans feel the themes treated by Thornton Wilder? Surely Romans, Greeks, Spaniards and Frenchmen have no monopoly on love, grief, hope and death. Are these emotions to be discounted absolutely because Wilder makes them known through Peruvians rather than Gastonians?

In the second place, Mr. Gold's step minces when he ventures upon the subject of style. It is almost as if he were enraged be-

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cause he never caught Mr. Wilder saying "I seen" for "I saw." He merely states that his enemy writes like Anatole France and Henry James and unlike all Mr. Gold's list of authors from Shakespeare to Whitman. . . .

No, Mr. Gold is not interested in style as art; perhaps not aware of it. For that matter he is not deeply interested in Communism. He is wound up in an endeavor to see that master and slave change places. No brotherhood of man for him. . . .

New York City. SIBYL BROWNE.

SIR: For some years I have been a constant reader of The New Republic, generally interested, often disagreeing, but never so infuriated as after reading the article by Michael Gold on Thornton Wilder. Why did you allow such an unfair, vulgar, tainted, poisonous review to be printed? Why did you allow a Jew to write a review of books written by a man who acknowledges himself the apostle of Anglo-Catholicism? A Jew naturally has no sympathy with this point of view. Thornton Wilder would have given a much fairer picture of Zionism! This review seems to me entirely unworthy of your standards of criticism. It is scurrilous, profane, dirty. The writer shows his vast ignorance of any comprehension of the vision, beauty, ideal for which Thornton Wilder stands. I am not an Anglo-Catholic, nor a parlor-Christian, but I heartily resent, as do many of my liberal friends, this attack on a man who we consider has done some lovely things and who we believe is endowed with a very lovely nature.

Cambridge, Mass. JEANNETTE B. PEABODY.

SIR: No doubt many typewriters more competent than mine have begun clicking out replies to Michael Gold's review of Thornton Wilder's books; it is not a review which is likely to go unanswered. It is a vigorous, not to say brutal, attack upon Mr. Wilder; one feels after reading it that the worst that can be said of Thornton Wilder has been said; and, personally, I am very glad that The New Republic has had the false courage and journalistic bad taste to print this invective.

The source of Mr. Gold's animus is stated clearly in the review. "Mr. Wilder is the poet of the genteel bourgeoisie." Which being interpreted means that Mr. Wilder is not a Marxian Socialist or Communist. I presume that this may be true, but I am unable to see what bearing it has upon Mr. Wilder's integrity as man or artist. As a writer, I submit, Mr. Wilder is entitled to any cosmic or social points of view that are native to his mind. It might very well be the business of an intelligent criticism to deduce his philosophical and social ideas (if any) from his work; but for a critic to attack an author's works of imagination *because* he dislikes that author's ideas is, simply, the negation of literary criticism. A writer is not a good writer or a bad writer because he is a Catholic or a Communist, but because he writes well or writes badly. Furthermore, it is plain that Mr. Gold is not angry with Mr. Wilder because he writes badly, but because he writes too well. . . .

Frankly, literary criticism is not an art adapted to the fanatically minded. If Capitalism or Communism or Catholicism or Presbyterianism seems to you the one salvation for humanity, well and good; it is certainly your business then to make (if possible) the one saving idea prevail. But, by the very intensity of your conviction, you are debarred forever from the art of criticism. It is too trivial an occupation for you. It is the fruit of tolerance, of the open and disinterested mind. Possibly, imaginative writing in prose or verse is not a matter of supreme importance. Possibly, in the words of Pope . . . poetry and criticism are "by no means the universal concern of the world, but only the affair of idle men who write in their closets, and of idle men who read there." Or, quite as possibly (I am stating my own belief) any man who, practising an art, brings through it to the world some new manifestation of beauty is a supreme benefactor—be his philosophical or social ideas what they may. Mr. Wilder, whatever his limitations as a writer, has lately done for a large number of us (negligible creatures in ourselves, no doubt) precisely that. We have read him with spontaneous delight. We have not felt that Mr. Wilder "strains to be spiritual"—we have felt, rather, the self-respect of a serene and quiet artist who is true to the special talents he possesses. Speaking merely for myself, it has never occurred to me to claim for Mr. Wilder a world-shaking genius. Parnassus is a large mountain and there are many pleasant groves on its ample shoulders. Mr. Wilder, I feel, has made one small shadowy grove entirely and intimately his own. I am grateful for having been allowed to enter it; I shall be even more grateful if I am occasionally permitted to return.

LEE WILSON DODD.

New Haven, Conn.

The Fascist Reign of Terror in the Eastern Adriatic

SIR: The reign of Fascist terror over 600,000 Slavic population has resulted, so far, in 2,172 assassinations and the imprisonment or deportation of over 20,000 native Slavs who were thrown as a prey to the mania of the Italian militarists and imperialists. Persecution of the Slavic intellectuals began with the very occupation of the region by the Italian troops.

With the enthronement of jingoistic hysteria and the rule of castor oil in Italy, the lot of the Slavs in the occupied area of the eastern Adriatic became one of unceasing agony and martyrdom. The burning down of Slavic schools, churches (Greek-Orthodox and Catholic alike), national homes, reading circles, newspaper plants, hotels and business places, went hand in hand with the official suppression of the Slovene and Serbo-Croatian language in public institutions, churches, business places and even in private homes. Not only historic and topographic names were changed for Italian ones, but under the Fascist "law" all private persons have to discard their Slavic family names and accept those given to them by the Fascists. Recalcitrants are being fined or otherwise persecuted by Fascist authorities.

Directing their persecution at the same time against the Italian working class, democrats and liberals, reducing into slavery ever increasing masses of the Italian people, the Fascists are arousing the people to a pitch of despair which is readily converted into acts of terror. If such occur in the rest of Italy the acts of rebellion are suppressed without publicity, but those in the occupied area of the eastern Adriatic are promptly blamed on the Slavs and a nation-wide hysteria of racial hatred evoked to prop up the Fascist regime. The bombing of the Fascist newspaper, Il Popolo, in Trieste may be an act of retaliation for the destruction by the Fascists of the Communist Il Lavoratore in the same city, as well as an act of protest.

Fascists are arresting Slavs en masse for alleged conspiracies and terrorism, and through the process of mock trials are throwing some into prisons and shoving others before the firing squad. The satanic policy serves at the same time two Fascist ends: first, that of terrorizing the defenseless Slavic population and, second, spreading jingoism and war fever in Italy, from which Fascism derives its waning force.

FRANCIS R. PREVEDEN, PH.D.

De Paul University, Chicago, Ill.

Aid for Philippine Students

SIR: Some of your readers would probably be interested in the establishment of a Moorfield Story Memorial Fund to assist Philippine students in American universities.

The passion for education that characterizes the youth of the Philippine Islands has led a considerable number to come to this country. Many of these have unusual ability and high ideals. They will make any sacrifice—of pride, pleasure, even food—to obtain the education they crave for its own sake and to equip them for larger usefulness to their people. With the cost too great and the chance for self-help too limited, they often find their health broken and their hopes shattered.

The proposed fund would be of inestimable value if wisely handled. Prominent Philippine leaders in Washington and in the Philippines have offered their grateful endorsement and hearty coöperation. Those who are interested may write to me at 208 First Street, S. E., Washington, D. C.

RICHARD W. HOGUE.

Washington, D. C.

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The Strange Case of Mr. Roosevelt and Dr. Taft

Taft and Roosevelt. The Intimate Letters of Archie Butt. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 2 vols. 862 pages. $7.50.

William Howard Taft, by Herbert S. Duffy. New York: Minton, Balch and Company. 345 pages. $5.

Roosevelt: His Mind in Action, by Lewis Einstein. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 259 pages. $3.

THE PUBLIC relation of Roosevelt and Taft is one which has occurred thrice before in our history. That a President should gain the final triumph of his administration by naming his successor was the case with Jefferson and Madison, with Madison and Monroe, and even more conspicuously with Jackson and Van Buren. In the first case, the President and his heir were united by a long friendship and political alliance which had tested the unity of their opinions. After Jefferson turned over the government to his successor he remained in complete retirement, rarely leaving Monticello. Madison followed the same course; and Jackson intended to do so, in spite of a temperament little schooled to silence and quiescence. There is a certain pathos in the clumsy effort of Jackson, when he had embarrassed his political heir by expressing his natural reaction in favor of the annexation of Texas, to undo the mischief he had inadvertently done him.

Jefferson, Madison and Jackson were old men when they completed their two full terms of office, and neither personal ambition nor political opportunity existed for them. The case of Roosevelt was different. It was his misfortune to have reached the presidency by a short cut, so that his relinquishment of the office when scarcely more than fifty years old left him distinctly at a loose end. Stalking lions and kings was merely an interim diversion. Moreover, the fact that he had served but one elected term tended to cast ambiguity upon his relation to the precedent established by Washington. It is true, on his election, he accepted this precedent in its spirit as applying to himself, but there is no doubt that later he bitterly regretted this self-denying ordinance. Moreover, in spite of the close friendship and long association between Roosevelt and Taft, they were fundamentally unlike in temperament and background—Roosevelt a man of action and trained in its schools, Taft a man of law and experience of courts. His success in the Philippines, and later in the War Department, where he dealt conspicuously with the problems of Cuba and the Panama Canal, Mr. Duffy shows to have been that of the upright and discerning judge. The break between Roosevelt and Taft was one of the personal tragedies of our history. The contest between them was the fire in which both men wasted away in career and character, but Roosevelt the more irreparably. What consequences it had for the United States and the world remain a matter of speculation; but to Mr. Einstein it is arguable that if Roosevelt had conserved his reputation and influence until 1914, his weight thrown into the trembling balance of war and peace might have inclined the scales and averted, for the time at least, the catastrophe.

Major Archibald Butt was military aide to the President under both Roosevelt and Taft. His letters, written to his sister-in-law from day to day, give a pleasant account of life in Washington. Those covering the Roosevelt administration have already been published; the present collection has the same qualities of frankness and shrewdness. Major Butt was a Southerner and a Democrat. He recalls his speech at a dinner of Republican statesmen, when he accused himself of being a false note in the general harmony and repeated the reply of Bishop Stire when asked about his politics: "Sir, I am a gentleman and I was born in Virginia." In this spirit Butt maintained a political and social detachment from the rivalries in which he took an observer's interest, like a Roman at the court of the Merovingians. He was an incomparable aide, full of wise forethought for his chief and adroitness in extricating him from difficult situations, which in Taft's case were not few. He arranged the President's routine to permit of a daily ride or round of golf; he talked ambassadors into good humor when the President left them cooling their heels; he arranged matters with salesmen to facilitate the President's Christmas shopping; he kept him awake, or at least from snoring, in church; he saw to it that the navy appointed officers to the "Mayflower" who would give Helen Taft a safe good time; he introduced thousands of visitors at the White House receptions, speeding up or slowing down the line according to numbers, and once, when the public frost was noticeable, running up the enumerating machine an extra thousand; he directed the White House dinners, settled questions of precedence, was not at a loss when Mrs. Taft's secretary had forgotten to direct cards to the men telling them whom to take out, and saved a statesman from strangling himself with an artichoke; he accompanied the President on his innumerable excursions about the country, dining incontinently with Yale men, Methodists, bankers, Sunday-school children, social workers, publishers, newspaper men, scientists, professors, veterans of blue and gray and lieutenants of the New York police, listening to hundreds of speeches from his chief, and, by deft manipulation of the time schedule, avoiding thousands of those by his hosts, even wading swollen streams in Virginia to pilot the presidential automobile to the anniversary celebration at Manassas. In short, everything that a military aide to a President could do or be, Major Butt did and was.

Throughout the tale of this varied performance he shows egotism, pardonable in letters to a relative, but also the personal charm which made him a favorite in Washington. Of the administration he was a caustic critic. He saw into the intrigues of party leaders like Murray Crane (Old Pussyfoot, as Taft called him) and Charles Norton, the President's secretary, to whose maladroit chicanery he attributed in large part the break with Roosevelt. His own sense of efficiency and loyalty made him despise the Cabinet which contributed so much to Taft's undoing; and his recollection of Roosevelt at the White House made the new regime irksome.

According to his account, sleep played a large part in the administration. In one of the first letters he speaks of Taft's "faculty of sleeping sitting up." The President on his journeys invariably planned to write his speeches on the train, but invariably went to sleep. At an official funeral Butt gave his seat beside the President to Justice White, but when he heard the usual snore and tried to wigwag the Justice he found the latter also asleep, and concluded to fix on him the audible scandal. At a Cabinet dinner he glanced around the table to find "MacVeagh, Wilson, Nagel, and even the Postmaster General fast asleep." After dinner the President also went to sleep. The Attorney General put the "Sextette" into the victrola because "it would wake anyone but a dead man," but was forced to conclude, "He must be dead."

Of his chief he gives a very human likeness. In this day-by-day narrative we see Taft's effort to keep his huge body from submerging his mind, by exercise which only

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enlarged his capacity for food and sleep; his procrastination, especially in the face of unpleasant decisions; his laziness interspersed by feats of endurance that wore out his aides; his smiling geniality which in his troubles became a mask; his genuine good-heartedness, broken by fits of anger; his pleasure in being thought well of, and his desire to think the best of others turning under suspicion into a disposition to think the worst; his loyalty defeated by vacillation; his honesty betrayed by generosity; above all, his lack of political acumen and sense of public appeal.

In the quarrel between Roosevelt and Taft, Butt's position was difficult, but he maintained a perfect loyalty to both, neutrality in word and deed. It was as if fearing his bias toward the former that he set down specifically his high opinion of Taft the man, with regretful reservations upon Taft the politician.

> In many ways he is the best man I have ever known, too honest for the presidency, possibly, and possibly too good-natured or too trusting or too something on which it is hard just now for a contemporary to put his finger, but on which the finger of the historian of our politics will be placed with accuracy. . . . He would save himself if he would only be himself; even now he can right himself like a great ocean liner, but he is going to have a hard time weathering the storm if he changes his course with each new sound of the foghorn he passes.

On the subject of the momentous break between Roosevelt and Taft the three books taken together give a full account and a credible interpretation. In perspective there is something almost sophomoric about it all. Butt tells us that Taft conjectured that the rift began with his letter on Roosevelt's departure to Africa, in which he bracketed his brother Charles with his predecessor as responsible for his elevation. His failure to retain the old Cabinet disappointed Roosevelt, and the dismissal of Pinchot irritated him. Taft's alliance with Aldrich and Cannon seemed to Roosevelt treachery to his policies, although, as Taft pointed out, it was the only way in which he could obtain legislation to carry those policies into effect. The filing of a suit for dissolution against the steel trust was another instance in which Taft's attempt to follow Roosevelt's lead recoiled upon him, for United States Steel was Roosevelt's example of the "good trust," and he himself was named in the suit, "thanks to that marplot Wickersham." Friends of both men, selfishly interested or not, widened the breach. The machinations of Taft's circle Butt saw at first hand, and he conjectured what was going on at Oyster Fay. In addition there was the irony of circumstances which seemed to conspire to put in the wrong all efforts to avert a fate which, Butt wrote, "is moving now from day to day with the irresistible force of the Greek drama."

In truth the situation was impossible. Roosevelt needed action, and the White House was the only place in the world where he could find it. He wanted to think that a national crisis demanded the recall of his pledge not to seek a third term, and the necessity of dramatizing his situation led him to exaggerate Taft's shortcomings and later into political aberrations which Butt would have classed with Taft's futilities. This chapter is lacking in his story, for he was spared the final test of his loyalty by his death in the sinking of the "Titanic."

Mr. Duffy, in his rather colorless life of Taft, shows that the contests staged by Roosevelt's managers for delegates from the Southern states to the Republican convention of 1912 were nearly all without merit, by admission of the Roosevelt men on the committee on credentials. The point was that without the seventy-two contested delegates, the National Committee would have lost control of the convention. Allowing them to vote on each other's admission gave rise to the cry of stolen delegates, to which Roosevelt committed himself so fanatically that, according to Mr. Einstein, he refused a compromise that would have given him the nomination. He was able to whip himself into an enthusiasm for measures in which he did not at heart believe, and wage a spectacular, if meretricious, campaign against the infamies of Taft. The same embarrassment characterized his later relations with the Progressive party, and his ambiguous attitude toward the two conventions in 1916. No one who was present at the last convention of the Progressives in Chicago will forget the bewildered horror of the delegates at his proposal that they should unite with the Republicans on Lodge. Mr. Einstein's interpretation of Roosevelt's mind in action is most valuable in the period when that mind was a house divided against itself.

Roosevelt and Taft at the White House were in complete contrast. Roosevelt was a great President, and he enjoyed the office as no other holder of it has done. Taft was a mediocre President, and he is among the presidential martyrs. Before him Buchanan and Johnson went through purgatory; after him Wilson and Harding descended into hell. Taft's ordeal was less severe than theirs, but its peculiar poignancy lay in the fact that his wounds were inflicted by a friend. After the White House had closed for both men they offer a further contrast. No other ex-President has served his country with the distinction of Taft. As teacher of law and Chief Justice he was once more himself. Compared with his later career, the decent retirement of Hayes and Cleveland is pallid; the exploits of Grant in business and Coolidge in literature are painful. He remains our greatest ex-President.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Soviet Foreign Policy

The Soviets in World Affairs: A History of Relations Between the Soviet Union and the Rest of the World, by Louis Fischer. New York: Cape and Smith. 2 vols. 1,356 pages. $10.

THE FIRST question which arises after a perusal of Mr. Fischer's monumental work concerns its nature: journalism or history? As journalism it ranks high. There are first-hand accounts of conversations with Chicherin, Litvinov and other participants in the events under discussion; "scoops" from the Soviet archives; résumés of unpublished protocols and draft treaties; and glimpses behind the scenes which elucidate a number of obscure episodes in Soviet diplomacy. As history, the book is open to doubt. Portions of it, especially those dealing with Brest-Litovsk and the period of Allied intervention, are written without any attempt at objectivity—more serious still, with the apparent purpose of championing the cause of the Soviet government. Rumor has it that Mr. Fischer wrote this history of the last twelve years at the behest of the Soviets. Had he frankly stated his purpose, his success would have been assured, provided he could have written with the lusty sense of humor characteristic of Soviet publicists. As it is, Mr. Fischer merely gets mad at a lot of people—at Churchill, at Ambassador Francis, at the Germans in Finland and the British in Murmansk, and since he offers no explanation for his irate attitude, the uncomfortable suspicion creeps in that he has an axe to grind.

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The secret Anglo-French convention for the division of south Russia into zones of influence, which Mr. Fischer appends in translation and on which, in large part, he bases his analysis of France's activities in Russia, has no other authentication than that "it was supplied from a British source." The historian may be justified in awaiting further proof before passing judgment on this document.

The outstanding fact which emerges from Mr. Fischer's book, although but briefly mentioned in the text, is that Soviet foreign policy has undergone since 1917 an evolution no less striking because periodically masked by the recurrence of incidents concerning debts and propaganda. World revolution has been definitely sacrificed to the consolidation of Socialism in the Soviet Union. The Third International, for the present at least, has been relegated to the background by the Five Year Plan. Stalin's slogan —"To build in tranquility"—presupposes money and peace. With the exile of Trotzky in 1927 the *Sturm und Drang* period of world revolution came to an end. The government which at Brest-Litovsk was ready to sacrifice any amount of territory if it could thereby reveal the predatory aims of imperialism once and for all to the workers of the world, did not hesitate, in 1929, to take up the cudgels in defense of its interests in the Chinese Eastern Railway against a people whom it had encouraged to shake off the imperialistic yoke. *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.*

The Soviet government's relations with Western states have been inevitably affected by the essential divergence, not to say antagonism, between capitalism and communism. Had Russia remained economically isolated, it might have succeeded in maintaining an inadequate existence on its own resources. The development of industry and the industrialization of agriculture, however, were impossible without foreign trade and capital. Conversely, had the area controlled by the Soviet government been insignificant in extent and poor in natural resources, it is conceivable that the Western powers would have left it to its own devices. A country with a population of one hundred and fifty million, however, cannot be disregarded with impunity. Post-war Europe sought markets and economic stability, and feared it would find neither if it continued to boycott Russia. Each needed the other, and each, not unnaturally, exaggerated the benefit the other would derive from a renewal of intercourse. Nevertheless, recognition was accorded by nearly all European states in the expectation that trade would follow recognition. These hopes were for the most part doomed to disappointment.

Russia, impoverished by war and revolution, was too poor to buy any but the bare necessities required by its program of industrialization—machinery and semi-manufactured goods; these could be easily supplied by only a few advanced industrial states, Germany, Great Britain and the United States. The monopoly of foreign trade proved an excellent weapon for barring imports which the country did not desire or could not afford. Imports were further hampered by the Soviet government's failure to obtain loans and long-term credits. The repudiation of debts and the nationalization of property had injured Soviet credit abroad. Nor has the Soviet thesis that compensation to private claimants will follow the extension of credits gained many adherents in the government or banking circles of Western states.

Mr. Fischer places correct emphasis on the importance of economic factors in any consideration of Soviet foreign policy. His analysis of the Genoa and Hague Conferences is illuminating, and confirms the impression gained by Lloyd George that the Bolsheviks are past masters in the art of playing one side off against the other even when they have little to offer themselves. Considerable light is likewise shed on Rakovsky's debt negotiations with the French government; the jockeying for position, which preceded the establishment of the famous German credit of 300,000,000 marks; and the maneuvers of Urquhart and Deterding to obtain compensation for property nationalized by the Soviet government.

The question of Communist propaganda is treated by Mr. Fischer with a considerable degree of detachment, if one excepts some lunges at the clumsiness of Scotland Yard. His conclusion—that the friendship evinced by the Soviet government for the "humbled and insulted" among the nations, particularly in the Far and Middle East, is more disturbing to Great Britain than actual propaganda in those regions—goes to the heart of the matter. The sections devoted to Soviet relations with Persia, Turkey and Afghanistan are perhaps the most interesting in the book. Mr. Fischer's examination of the Zinoviev letter leaves little room for doubt that this controverted document, even if authentic, was brought to light chiefly to serve the ends of party politics.

The negative and non-aggressive character of Soviet foreign policy, Mr. Fischer points out, is determined by avoidance of entangling alliances and a desire for peace pending the fulfillment of the Five Year Plan. In Europe, as in Asia, the Soviet government befriends those countries which it regards as victims of the present system, whether it be typified by the treaty of Versailles or colonial administration. Germany was in the past the object of Soviet solicitude. The Western orientation of German diplomacy at Locarno and Geneva, however, has caused uneasiness in Moscow, where Germany has been accused of "neo-imperialism." The Soviet government's tendency to associate only with weak or crippled states and its egocentric conviction that all moves on the international chessboard are a threat to its existence, would doubtless be interpreted by a psychologist as signs of an inferiority complex and of resort to a defense mechanism.

It is to be regretted that Mr. Fischer, with his unrivaled opportunities for research and observation, was either unwilling or unable to hold himself aloof sufficiently long to give an impartial account of his inquiry. The time is probably not yet ripe for a definitive history of Soviet foreign relations. Meanwhile, Mr. Fischer's work remains a unique and valuable record of international events as the Soviets see them.

VERA MICHELES DEAN.

King Babbitt

Henry of Navarre, by Henry Dwight Sedgwick. Indianapolis: The Bobbs Merrill Company. 324 pages. $5.

THE FIRST Bourbon was scarcely a hero to his countrymen while alive; it was only his untimely taking off (though just in time for Spain, Rome and the Hapsburgs) which gave him a kind of lay canonization in France and elsewhere. What did reign first in the hearts of the sixteenth-century French was not a person, or an abstract patriotism, but rather Our Lady Theology. For a proposition in divinity, bearing the *imprimatur* of Rome or Geneva, the most male and bullet-headed of men were ready to make short shrift of the patriotic sentiment, or cut the throat of any individual having divine right or not. The spotless Coligny rallied the English time and again to his Calvinist standards in exchange for Calais; while the Duke of Guise fought the Catholic battle with a

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Spanish pension in his pocket. What sense of nationality there was seemed to be entrenched in the dying House of Valois, in the unfortunate Henri III, Navarre's predecessor, shivering on the running sands between the raging sea of Catholic France and the great Devil of Calvinism to the south. The thing that renders Henry of Navarre sympathetic to many and interesting to all is that he struck out on a new tack, and is the John the Baptist of nationalism and religious tolerance, the precursor of the Absolute Monarchy and *Frankreich über alles*.

In person the King of Navarre was hardly a paladin. It is worth noting that he was the son of Jeanne d'Albret, one of the most insufferable women in history, a dour Protestant wowser of the worst type who carried her fanaticism so far as to rip the figure of a celebrating mass priest from her mother's tapestries, "replacing it by a fox." The great Calvin approved of her highly, while frowning upon her volatile husband, Antoine de Bourbon, said to have been the original of Gargantua. "He is *totus Venerius;* all for the women," wrote the Geneva Pope sadly. Parenthetically this is more than could have been claimed for Calvin. Young Henry grew up the moral image of his father, except that in the boy an unstable cunning developed into something resembling a modern brain. He had been hardly born when his grandfather, old Henri D'Albret, another enormous Rabelaisian charact r, took the baby in his arms, rubbed a bit of garlic across the lips and touched them with a drop of strong Jurançon wine. To this christening was later added a regimen of black bread and cheese, beef and onions; scrambling barefoot over rocks; making love with the mentality and taste of a Gascon ploughboy. To this mentality the great Navarre stayed faithful in the main throughout the adventurous and subtle complications of religious and political intrigue. Wine and garlic, garlic and wine! He remained cunning, coarse, vivacious, sentimental, fundamentally heartless, rather malodorous and base. There can be no greater contrast than that between the last Valois and the first of the Bourbons. To the exquisite and decadent Henri III, an intellectual and in his way a great gentleman, succeeded a first-class gentleman-farmer, a capital business man.

Nothing so reveals both Henry's character and his real intelligence after the death of his predecessor as his triumphant treatment of the religious problem responsible for the more infernal aspect of the sixteenth century. He was the legal heir to the throne, and he was also a Calvinist. In the year 1589 he was in almost precise'y the same position that Elizabeth of England had been just thirty years previous. It is one of the enigmas of history why France did not go Protestant. The new religion had almost everything on its side in France; Catholic abuses, the greed of the rich, the envy of the shopkeeping class, the leadership of the nobles, divine right et cetera. The only thing that diverted the country from the dark Calvinist road was, we are obliged to admit, Henry himself. A single act of courage and good will annihilated in a moment the dogma of predestination. There is something to be said, after all, for a prolonged dietary of onions and wine. Doubtless it makes in the main for that cerebral good sense which caused Navarre to decide that his countrymen were not sheep like the folk across the Channel to be herded into the fold of whatever patchwork faith their wealthy rulers might devise. His "conversion" was characteristically amusing. To his Catholic mistress, the famous *"charmante Gabrielle"* he wrote from St. Denis: "I arrived yesterday afternoon, and was nagged by God-hoppers (*Dieu-gardes*) till I went to bed. . . . On Sunday I will make the perilous leap. . . . I kiss a thousand times the beautiful hands and lips of my divine Mistress. . . ." For him, at least, the divine Mistress was not Theology.

It is no wonder that so vivacious and good-tempered a figure retains its popularity in France and everywhere else where people enjoy a good story. Thanks to the circulation of Malherbe's conception of the *honnête homme*, Navarre has remained perhaps the typical Gallic ideal. Of course there is another side to this kind of character which may be discovered by reading the "Dictionary of the Good Bourgeois" in the back of Flaubert's "Bouvard et Pécuchet," or by pondering De Maistre's statement that "there is nothing on earth so frightful as the secret soul of an 'honest man.'" Of this side there is naturally little trace in Mr. Sedgwick's excellent biography of Henry IV. "In deference," said the author in his preface, "to romantical, Protestantish or sexually minded readers, I have concentrated on such [superficial] conceptions, and left out of the background all I could of what is usually called History." Within these limits then, Mr. Sedgwick has written a really capital book on the White Feather. We only wish, were it indeed possible, that he had enlightened, one way or another, the problem of Navarre's death. It has been a thorny case, at the time or since. The official historian ascribes it to the act of an irresponsible Catholic, unconvinced of the King's conversion. The great jurist Harley, alluding to noble instigators, said at the time, "The proof of their complicity is only too evident." Michelet and others have attempted to trace the assassination to the Italian *camerilla* at the Louvre, to Henry's last mistress, Mademoiselle d'Entragues and to the Duc d'Epernon, a former *mignon* of Henri III. But Michelet, despite his research and vast gifts, rewrote much of French history in the spirit of a boulevard dramatist. He believed, among other things, that the Huguenot cause was an affair of patriots and holy martyrs, that Louis XIV was not the son of Louis XIII, that the French Revolution was an undisguised blessing. Assuredly Henry's death came just in time for the Papist cause in Europe. Mr. Sedgwick in his final chapter gives us an interesting detail. At the moment of his assassination the King was driving with the Duc d'Epernon in a narrow street near the Fontaine des Innocents and the Halles of today. When Ravaillac stabbed him, the Duke cried out: "Do not touch the murderer!" This would seem to establish the innocence of Henri the Third's ancient favorite, of whom a fine portrait is reproduced in Mr. Sedgwick's valuable book.

CUTHBERT WRIGHT.

Notes on Novels

The Big Barn, by Walter D. Edmonds. Boston: Little Brown and Company for the Atlantic Monthly Press. $2.

"THE BIG BARN" is Mr. Edmonds' second picturization of the Erie Canal country during the period preceding the Civil War. Dan Harrow, the adventurous hero of "Rome Haul," has turned farmer; and he serves as a background figure in the story of Old Man Wilder's last project—the building of the biggest barn in New York state. Although Mr. Edmonds does reproduce the idiom, color and stern tribal code of a pioneer scene, his suggested literary kinship with Mark Twain is merely the accident of a similar subject matter. Twain's excursions into "local color" were nearly always grounded on a detached and precise insight into his personages; and his humor merged invariably with satire or irony. There is

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none of Twain's implicit "criticism of life" in "The Big Barn." Since Mr. Edmonds himself is never outside provincial American attitudes, his characters are presented and judged after the manner of the average movie thriller. It is obvious, for example, that the author is patronizing the scholarly Henry, glorifying Henry's rakish younger brother and justifying Wilder's tyrannical self-indulgence. When Henry's pretty wife is suspected of unorthodox sex impulses, the author takes her out of the realm of ordinary womanhood by interpreting her infidelity as her duty to provide an heir to the household.

The Mother, by Sholom Asch. Translated from the Yiddish by Nathan Ausübel, with a preface by Ludwig Lewisohn. New York: Horace Liveright. $2.50

MR. ASCH is known to American theater-goers as the author of "The God of Vengeance," a somberly powerful work, built against the background of a brooding religious mysticism. Although he is primarily a novelist, "The Mother" can hardly be considered to support Ludwig Lewisohn's estimate of him as "one of the most original and eminent [men] now writing in any language." In this first of his numerous novels to appear in English, Mr. Asch falls too willingly into a facile and benevolent sentimentalism. "The Mother" is interesting only as it conveys the colorful atmosphere of a racial group and the tragedy of the older generation surrendering its children to the New World. The characters are only superficially explained. Anshel, the reader of Scripture in a small Polish town, who becomes a tailor in the New York ghetto, his devoted Suré and her rebellious offspring, are too easily identified with conventional types in fiction. Mr. Asch's nationalism gets the better of him when he has the elder daughter return from the studio of her sculptor-lover to assume the "burden she had inherited from her mother." The sculptor's conception of "The Mother" as the symbol of suffering humanity is characteristic of Mr. Asch's somewhat remote idealism.

Red Snow, by F. Wright Moxley. New York: Simon and Schuster. $1.

THE form and method of "Red Snow" are at least as old as "Candide" and "Rasselas." The descent upon the earth of "a flashy precipitate not unlike snowflakes, carmine in color and ashy in substance," is mysteriously responsible for the end of human procreation. The collapse of industrial production that follows the dearth of wage slaves, the reversion of nations and individuals to an unhypocritical condition of savagery, and the eventual return of the animal kingdom, are an excellent opportunity for satire, and Mr. Moxley takes advantage of it. Yet "Red Snow" is hardly the great allegorical indictment of the human race. Phæton Andrews and his friends of the Ramapo colony are conventional "flats." The only significant feature of the book is a pervasive bitterness; but this emotion is buried under the weight of a super-literary style and Mr. Moxley's erudition. The impression ultimately conveyed is one of all-embracing and pretentious pity.

David Golder, by Irene Nemirovsky. Translated from the French by Sylvia Stuart. New York: Horace Liveright. $2.

MME. NEMIROVSKY has dealt honestly with the figure of the venturesome old Jewish financier: his wealth, his reversion to an earlier poverty, his vengefully greedy materialism, and most of all his loneliness.

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When it does not forsake objectivity—as it does in the gushy love scenes between the grasping daughter of the Biarritz household and her crooning ex-aristocrat—"David Golder" suggests the novels of Julian Green. An unsentimentalized (though sympathetic) setting down of the most sordid human motives, a sense of the ridiculously grotesque and a feeling for dramatic values contribute to its power. What the book lacks is a matter of completeness. Green's plots unroll with a steadily developed rhythm which, though premeditated, achieves a complete revelation of character. In "David Golder," the bare narrative moves so rapidly that the characters, with the possible exception of Golder himself, are only partly realized. The realistic novel does not need to follow the naturalistic stage play in an exclusive use of action and dialogue. It may dwell legitimately on shades of feeling that lie beneath the surface. The author of "David Golder," by avoiding excess emotionalism in this first book of hers, seems to have limited herself to an unnecessarily formalized set of rules. She has, nevertheless, written an intense and genuine novel. BEN LAPIDUS.

The Family, by François Mauriac. Translated by Lewis Galantière. New York: Covici-Friede. $2.

MAURIAC is admired by many Frenchmen for a certain lyrical quality which they claim to find in his novels. Leaving aside the question of whether lyricism should be a novelist's prime virtue, an examination of his work discloses a style rich in figures without becoming ornate, supple and elastic, useful for conveying light and color—Mauriac writes excellently about the sun-permeated country of his southern province—or for describing vaporous emotions. Yet the total effect his style produces is one of elegant enervation, a gentle melancholy which imparts to all his novels a colorful languor and makes even the most violent emotions seem unreal and unimportant. When such a style is turned to analyzing minutely characters who are especially morbid, the effect of unreality is heightened and the novel becomes merely the description of individuals tormenting themselves and each other to no particular purpose. This is more evident in "Genitrix," the less good of the two more or less closely connected novels which compose this volume. The emotions of the mother and son appear lacking in immediacy partly because the characters themselves are drawn along lines so petty that their reactions are unimportant, and partly because the analysis, despite its minuteness in trivial details, fails to clarify what should be their important moments. E. A.

Contributors

HAROLD LOEB, former editor of Broom and author of "Tumbling Mustard" and other novels, spent several months in Palestine two years ago.

CONRAD SEILER is the author of "Suicide and Other One-Act Comedies" and other plays.

W. B. YEATS is the well known Irish poet and essayist.

VERA MICHELES DEAN frequently contributes reviews and articles dealing with Russian affairs to The New Republic.

CUTHBERT WRIGHT, after five years in France, has returned to America and is an instructor of History at the Gunnery School in Washington, Connecticut. He is a frequent contributor to The New Freeman, The Commonweal and The New Republic.

BEN LAPIDUS contributes to The New Freeman and The Herald Tribune "Books." He is at present living in New York.

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